出口日出麿

# 生きがいの創造

新装版

**混迷の現代に贈る知と愛と勇気の書!**

**私の人生を変えたこの一冊!!**

出口日出麿先生の偉大なみ心に触れさせてつつ、
今日ある自分は、その根源をこの"生きがいの創造"
によって教えられました。混迷の時代を生き抜くための
"人生の指針"となる本書を多くの人々に贈りたいと思います。

ロスオリンピック体操個人総合優勝　具志堅幸司

新装版

# THE CREATION OF MEANING

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# PART I. — THE PATH OF SELF-CULTIVATION

**Without Selfishness, No Fear**

Whether we amount to anything or not depends upon whether we are wholeheartedly devoted or not

Everyone dies. Without exception. Before dying we want to accomplish something. We wish to leave behind a mark of our existence on the earth, to leave behind something worthwhile—everyone feels this. This is as it should be.
The world does not at all conform itself to our desires and expectations. Wretched, meaningless, exasperating—such is what we all find the world to be.

We must become simpletons in order to accomplish our true work. Man is disappointingly small-minded: in even the most trivial matters he is inclined to show off his own importance, and he worries himself solely with myriad useless things.
We must endeavor to be broad-spirited enough to ignore what those around us say, acting with confidence and independence.

To think poorly of others merely reveals our own degradation.

Without selfishness, there is no fear.
Without fear, there is limitless freedom

**To Know One's True Self.**

It is fine to say, "I think this...", but you must never assert such things as, "What I say is indisputable...".

This is because we are but insignificant specks in a wide and limitless universe.

In order to know yourself, you must first know all that is around you. By comparing yourself with others, for the first time your own nature is made clear.

Though we can clearly judge the actions of others, when it comes to judging our own cases, our personal interests and attachments lead us astray.

For the most part, it is not our place to criticize the actions of others. It is best to simply mind our own affairs.

By clinging to our narrow-minded ways we bring greater suffering upon ourselves. If we carefully observe the words and deeds of others,

we can see that in nine cases out of ten these arise from self-centered interests. This is only to be expected, and from a certain standpoint is even excusable, but because the world is not ours alone, there are times when we must ignore what is in our own best interest and make sacrifices.
This spirit of selflessness is highly lacking in modern society.

Those who are young are apt to take things too lightly; they tend to pass over things summarily. Because their way of thinking is still naive, they see everything in a simplistic manner. When these youths first set out to make their way in the world, they come to realize just how very complicated things are. Then, once they get their bearings, they begin to approach things more seriously and steadily.
As we accumulate experience in this world, we come to view things more soberly, and the more we are able to attain such calmness, the more we are able to perceive the true nature of things. As we lose our reckless impatience for change, we are able to leave all things as they are, acknowledging the inevitable progress of each towards perfection. At the same time, we become aware of the profound influence of our every word and action upon the things around us.
Then, for the first time, we can reach a basic state of righteousness, by regarding all other people with generous and broad-minded spirit, and judging our own conduct rigorously.

When things go well, we quickly assume that this is due to our own cleverness, but when things go poorly, it is our wont to quickly lose faith in the world. Essentially, this is because we fail to have faith in ourselves; we are lacking in true wisdom. We do not yet understand the principles of the boundless universe, and our lives are overly narrow.
People tend to think that they have endured great hardship, and pursued learning in many areas, and so they enjoy a false sense of self-importance. However, this sense of self-importance becomes a stumbling block for such people, making it impossible for them to appreciate the virtues of others.
No matter how much one has suffered, or how hard one has studied, it is in vain if this led to neither self-examination nor any awakening of understanding. No matter how great one's superficial material gain, without spiritual progress, it amounts to nothing.
The depth of one's understanding is not determined by the length of time spent in learning. There are those who realize profound enlightenment in but a few days or months. For others, the passage of many years sees not the slightest advancement.
Essentially, such progress depends upon one's powers of observation and introspection.

We are inclined to dismiss lightly the efforts of others. If, however, we find ourselves in the same position, we suddenly realize it is not so easy as it had seemed.
This holds true for any situation. We must always experience things first-hand in order to understand them, and so we must endeavor to gain as much experience as we can while we are still young. If we do this, we will eventually be able to distinguish the true nature of people and things at a glance, and will no longer be perplexed by the insignificant, nor complain about the trivial.

## Oneself As Part of the Whole

People's mental states vary with their age and station in life: one cannot expect them to be the same this year as they were last year, much less maintain their present states unchanged for all eternity. Nevertheless, we are apt to judge everything on the basis of our selves, leading us to criticize others. If, for example, someone is getting on in years and leads a placid life, he is likely to order his children and grandchildren to be quiet and unobtrusive as well. This is a great mistake.
People are surprisingly forgetful—if one becomes prosperous, one completely forgets what it felt like to be poor and suffering, immediately becoming arrogant and scorning others. Unable to sleep ourselves, we cannot demand that others stay awake too; just because one is happy, one cannot heedlessly force others to rejoice as well.

Truly, man cannot comprehend anything beyond what lies before his eyes at the moment. From this we can see just how unreliable human intellect is.

If one does not maintain a strong and stable intellect, when one is confronted with trials and temptations one will tend to waver and go astray.

Even if you think that it is wrong to turn a blind eye to another's misdeeds, if that person is set in his ways he will be deaf to all your admonitions and advice, and you will simply have to back off and let him do as he wishes. After a while he will find himself stuck in a bad situation, and for the first time will open his eyes and see the truth of the matter.
Because they do not wish to feel regret and disappointment, if people really want to do something they will go ahead and try it no matter what, even if you tell them they should give it up. Then, one can only stand back and wait for them to realize the truth on their own.
The person who has tried and failed at various endeavors, and after failing rethought and tried again, will finally after much hardship

have a true understanding of the world.
However, depending on peoples' natures, there are those who are quickly and easily enlightened, and then there are those who must suffer great hardship before they come to any understanding at all.

If one reflects quietly upon oneself, one will soon realize that one is not all that special. It is also easy to see that everyone naturally possesses a [brutal] side. However, from theory and practice we come to realize that this is a deplorable state, and that through gradual understanding, experience, and guidance our natures can be changed. That is, we can progress from a life of sole self-interest to one of more universal concern.
As tiny cells in a vast world, we must live to serve the interest of this greater world. Unless we clearly realize this truth concerning our existence, we will not truly understand how to live—and our lives will be reckless, foolhardy, and without meaning.
However, to think only of others and to neglect oneself—for example, fasting when one is hungry and seeking only self sacrifice—will not do either. As an essential part of the whole of mankind, one must provide for one's own self to a certain extent. It is important to strike a balance between concern for oneself and concern for mankind.

## Don't be Confined by Notions of Hell

When one is striving at this and that, and those around one do not acknowledge this or follow one's lead—to become angry and resentful because of this is a great problem. This is because from the beginning one is behaving in a way that demands that others think and act just as one does. In other words, this is merely a different manifestation of self-centeredness; it is nothing but self-attachment. The assertion of one's puny ego in this way is liable to merely alienate others and have harmful results.
All things and all people have different functions and distinctive characteristics, and to have the arrogance to try to force others to conform to one's own nature is blasphemy of God. As a rule, to guide others is very good, but one must never force them.
To guide others in accordance with their true natures is to awaken and develop this nature; while to force others, drastically trying to mold them to one's own notions, is to ignore their true natures. Unless people have their own desires and ideas of what they want to be, no matter how much they are shown the truth by others this is merely as pearls before swine. They will simply be annoyed.
In this world, people often behave as though they are men of virtue and all others are thieves and swindlers. "I'm very polite and have a strong sense of duty, while everyone else is irresponsible and boorish,"

they say, “Only I am correct, and all others are wrong.” Such ‘learned’ moralists are all too common in this world.
Such people are not even remotely qualified to lead others. This is because their state of mind is in denial of everything other than their own selves; it is compulsively inclined to exclude all else. These people are truly intolerable in their love for all that is similar to them, and their downright hate for that which is dissimilar.
With this type, although on the surface he may appear to be so, he can never truly be a wise man, nor a man of virtue. This is because the true man of wisdom and virtue must acknowledge Divine will, and love all others indiscriminately.
Moreover, among those who think themselves to be men of virtue, most, on the contrary, are small, narrow-minded, obstinate, and inconsistent. Yet, among those who are labeled as scoundrels, many men of truly perfect virtue may be found. The former gird themselves in armor from head to toe and lurk fearfully in their ivory towers, while the latter trudge naked across mountains and rivers of blood and tears. (?) The domain of the former type is limited to but a tiny area of the world’s boundless space, while the domain of the latter is highly adaptable, and thus may encompass everything.
Essentially, all things of this earth, whether we find them to be good or bad, exist by the providence of God. To mercilessly condemn things, trying to reject and destroy them, is clearly an act of the devil, conceived of in hell.

The heart is an awesomely potent thing.
If only the hearts of the world’s people were to become truly pure, then our laws and social system would no longer be of great importance.

In our work we must give first priority to people and to the spirit and soul. Emphasizing only the work itself will eventually result in failure.

If you grow tired of exchanging arguments with others, you are well on your way to understanding.

To make one’s small and narrow self the foundation
For reflecting upon the multitude of things,
Is like, in the words of a proverb,
“Gazing at heaven through the eye of a needle”
Or a frog’s view of the world from his well.
To kill an ‘enemy’ is regarded as loyalty.
To kill a person is punished with death.
Thus do we call that which is advantageous good,
And that which is inconvenient bad.
How ridiculously we cling to the injustice

Of our view of good and evil in this world.

God, looking down upon earth
Sees each and every one of us
As essential creations.
All of us are good,
Free from evil.
One must not reproach others, calling them hopeless,
Angry at them simply because they are different than one.
Even if you don't like something,
If it's okay with others,
Then it's not so bad, is it?
What's more, there's nothing truly needless,
On heaven or on earth.

Every one of us likes to think that he alone is an enlightened being;
The sole spiritual leader of the world.
Guiding himself through his own world,
To hell or paradise as he wishes.
Since none of us are God,
We are hardly qualified to absolutely lead others.
Therefore we can only hope, as far as possible,
To take each person by the hand
And strive together towards a better world.

As long as there is no harm done to our own selves,
The death and injury of others are of little consequence to us.
Drinking wine as Rome burns,
Applauding the murder of pregnant women,
Little has changed over the centuries.

When hardship affects us directly,
Even if it is the most insignificant matter,
We cry out and call it misfortune.
God, looking down from heaven
And seeing his billions of children,
Does not discriminate among them in the least,
Nor treat one warmly and another coldly.
Mountains, rivers, grass, trees, birds, and beasts,
The unfailing cycle of day and night, spring and fall,
All the things of this world were created by God.
God granted us all with equal resources,
So if we truly possess power and wisdom,
We will take and use only that which we need.
To ignore one's own lack of effort,
Ever waiting for fortune to come one's way,

This is truly a vile tendency.

Since each man has been blessed
With a portion of the Divine spirit,
If we could only reunite our hearts with the universe,
God's will would be realized.
To gaze happily upon a world of growing prosperity,
Without discrimination between self and others,
So do I earnestly hope for the realization
Of a harmonious kingdom of heaven on earth.

Jealous-hearted,
Evil-spirited,
Small-minded.
Such is the nature of man.

Desiring to become king or god
Looking down upon others,
And viewing them as one's servants
Hateful, narrow-minded, and greedy.
Such too is the nature of man.

Struggling with others,
Defeating others,
These actions are vile.
Blood-stained, sweat-soaked, and impure;
Such are the endeavors of man.

Acting in the interest of the multitude,
Gladly sacrificing one's own self—
Though others speak ill of one,
One receives the praise of God.
Doing good while bearing evil thoughts,
Helping others merely to benefit oneself—
Though others praise one,
One earns only the wrath of God.

When praising someone, are you not merely being obsequious?
When criticizing others, is this not out of self-interest?
Think. Always.

Because we think only of our own good,
And because we desire only our own benefit,
We are constantly angry and troubled,
Worrying that others are better off than we.

Therefore, you yourself,
When angry, troubled, or envious,

Should reflect upon the state of your heart.
Without constant striving and effort,
We become angry and resentful of each other.
This has always been so...
Can this really be man's true nature?

# PART II. — IN SEARCH OF HUMAN SINCERITY

**One Who Can Weep and Feel Anger**

A man's greatness can be measured by his broadmindedness. The broadminded man can feel anger when it is necessary, and likewise shed tears when they are called for.

Some people endeavor to train themselves to never lose their tempers, as though regarding this to be the highest form of self-cultivation. This sounds plausible enough at first, but it is by no means an ideal state. When anger is called for, one should naturally feel angry, and when events do not merit anger, one should feel not even the slightest ire—this is ideal.

The prouder a person, the more vulnerable they are; the more short-tempered a person, the pettier their nature; and the more brutal a person, the weaker they actually are. Moreover, the more stubborn a person, the sooner will their resistance break down. Therefore, these sorts of people are very easy to control and manipulate.
Those who are hardest for us to deal with are those who cannot be easily labeled as foolish or wise, knowledgeable or ignorant, composed or troubled.

We cannot possibly hope to discern a person's true nature after only knowing them for a few weeks. Still more, our very first impressions of others are not the least bit reliable.

To do good deeds for others merely in pursuit of one's own aims is in effect to love oneself through the medium of others. Without any ulterior motive, we must love others simply for the sake of loving them.

To dote upon a person only in their presence is not love. To truly love someone one must labor for them even though they may never know of it. One must not indulge in petty, self-absorbed love. From a broad viewpoint, to strive to act solely in another's best interests is the true way to love someone.

There are many people who can be called nice, or honest, but are essentially no more than that, and have no real contribution to make. No matter whether a person is deeply evil or wholly good, if they possess great ability and resourcefulness, this is evidence of their strong spirit.
Those who have a markedly evil side have a strong talent for doing good as well, and if the deeply evil man could only come to his senses and truly repent, he would be a far greater person than the half-hearted doer of timid good deeds.

In ancient times, the founders of religions did not become such because of their great learning or distinguished lineage. They became leaders solely due to their strong faith and discipline. Rather than being based on theory or knowledge, their wholehearted devotion and simple obedience to Divine will caused them to be noticed and chosen by God.

**True Merit Shows in Times of Adversity.**

The great man has had to struggle with considerable effort and hard work at all things—by no means was he born a master of the true way.
No matter how slow-witted a person, if he applies himself steadily to a task for several years, he will come to be able to understand that work with considerable profundity.
Because each and every one of us was born with our own destined nature, if only we could accept this nature and work in accord with it, this would be best. Making such excuses as, “I’m too old” or “I’m not so bright”, will cause one to amount to nothing. Japanese people are especially impetuous and overly concerned with their public image, and as men who belong to distinguished families start to age a bit, they become extremely worried that others will ridicule them, and so are unable to work with any clear resolve.
One should always feel as though one has just been newly born, starting each movement afresh with freedom and ease. If one constantly worries about one’s age and station in life, how can one possibly hope to accomplish one’s true work?
Above all, if one can only realize that any insight and skill acquired in this world is brought unchanged into the spirit realm, and that perfection of the self is eternal—this is most important. Right up until one draws one’s final breath in this world, it is the time for self-cultivation.

If you hoard a large sum of money, an accident might happen and you could quickly lose it all. However, if you work with great industry, the spiritual treasure you will thereby acquire can never be lost.
For example, if a person knows the art of making a tea bowl, should that person lose his tea bowl he can always make another. Not only that, because the effort he spends in making a tea bowl becomes incorporated into him, when he starts out to make something else he will be able to apply this experience.
Although one does nothing but sing one’s own praises, people are keen critics, and they will hardly be so easily fooled.

Unless one first purifies one's own heart, one cannot possibly exercise influence on others.

If one is careful in one's heart, one can discern the truth at a glance, but if one does not pay attention to one's heart, one will go on repeating the same mistakes all one's life.

People's true merit is revealed at once in their reaction to adversity. Many people, without reflecting upon themselves, are apt to resent others and curse the world.

Those raised in prosperity tend to be too lazy to do anything by their own efforts, and unfortunately are incapable of heartfelt sympathy for others. The man who has experienced many things and undergone great hardships tends to be broadminded, and naturally possesses a trustworthy nature.
However, a man who has encountered adversity once, willing or not tends to become jaundiced towards the world, and especially if he is a man of slight talent, a hateful pride and defensiveness encumbers him, and he is unable to get along with his fellow men. This man of slight talent and knowledge is inevitably impatient, weak-willed, apt to hastily try to force things to their fruition, and likely to underestimate others. We must not overlook our imperfections, vainly hating our surroundings, resenting society, and envying others.
Especially in recent times, our society has become extremely orderly, and it is no longer so easy to suddenly gain fame as it was in the past. Looking at the example of our modern society, far more so than the man of genius, the industrious type is most likely to make a name for himself in the end. In everything, the final victory will be had by the man who is above average in his industry and his perseverance. The more one comes to know the ways of the world, the deeper one comes to understand that all things do not obey simple logic, and that transient trickery and fraud possess no virtue.

Unless one has encountered great hardship, it is very difficult to reach a state of true understanding.
However, by hardship I do not simply mean externally apparent adversity, but inwardly experienced trials as well.
Unless one has surmounted many difficulties, one cannot help but be narrow-minded.
Piling up experiences one-by-one, we gradually become truly wise, and are able to be large-hearted and broad-minded. But if from the beginning we worry about making trivial mistakes, and aim to do things without erring in the least, then our cases are hopeless. This is exactly like expecting to become a great fencing master without ever being touched by an opponent, or rising to Sumo's highest rank of

*Yokozuna* without once tasting the dust of the ring in defeat.

A person who has never suffered is a person without depth.

One who has struggled through much adversity naturally possesses a great, intangible, latent power.

No experience is without value.

## Living in Freedom

In all things, it is best not to allow oneself to become entrapped. Just thinking of how many docile people up until now have been enslaved by moral law and tradition, living wretchedly pathetic lives of self-renouncing insignificance, causes me unspeakable anger.
The square and proper man is essentially nothing but a coward. This type is stubborn, bigoted, conservative, and truly difficult to deal with. Such people have exerted a spiritually stunting influence on society throughout history, and are without question tremendously vile.

At all times, people give thought only to their own personal benefit. They think of all things in the universe in terms of their own personal gain, and so they are constantly in mortal fear of others trespassing on their rights. Therefore, these types are apt to strongly misinterpret the slightest words and actions of others as affecting them in a bad way. The result of this is that they soon lose all but a few friends; treating everyone with hostility, and always guarded in their dealings with others.
On reflection, while there are no truly evil people in this world, essentially whether one is good or evil is determined by whether one is selfish or not. All people treat themselves very well, and also any others who share their interests, but if someone should be in even the slightest way opposed to those interests, the majority of people suddenly turn into men of evil character. This is precisely the behavior of a creature of hell—the true man of virtue never resents even those who act in direct violation of his welfare. Such a man simply admonishes these wrongdoers—even the most incorrigible types—using any means possible to gently enlighten them concerning their misdeeds.
God's light shines on all without discrimination, but depending on the degree of our openness, the amount of illumination we receive differs.

There is nothing worse than to set aside one's unfulfilled aims deep in one's heart. Since leaving things undone is a sin, I prefer the man who says and does as he thinks over the hypocritical moralist.
As long as a person carries a lump of hatred around inside him, everyone who comes into contact with him will be affected by this evil, and their feelings unconsciously degraded.
The sort of man I respect most is he who never harbors the least bit of ill feeling, always innocent and open-hearted as a child. I have no love for the pretentious moralist.

Although we may not always be correct, each of us should bear our own individual opinions concerning all things.

A surprising number of people, even when they are directly confronted with a situation, will never have the slightest idea what to do, and will wander around in a haze of doubt to the very end. Nothing is more vital in a man than determination.
As humans we fret a great deal, worrying only of the future, and are unable to cultivate ourselves and make any progress in our present states. Because we are imperfect beings to the very last one of us, we must strive to transcend this state at all costs.
We must become people of broad thinking, comparing ourselves extensively with others, and then putting forth our own unique viewpoints. Of course, such opinions must be expected to change with the passage of time.

If a person insists at all costs upon being bound by his livelihood and obligations, there is little that can be done. However, for the most part, there is nothing of greater evil in this world than to repress one's true spirit, doing things one finds hateful because of one's enslavement to social pressure and ambition.
The number of people who have ruined their bodies and spirits for the sake of their petty self-attachment and greed is vast.

We must not think ourselves to be great, or especially talented. At the same time we must not become obsessed with the thought that we are worthless, foolish, or incompetent, either.
To go either way is to fall prey to a dangerous misconception.

Veritably, to become a great fool who has risen above everything, a true simpleton—this is most essential of all.

A lord today, unless you can happily become a beggar tomorrow you cannot hope to accomplish your true work.

That all things are mutually complementary is a fundamental truth of our universe—the man who is wise at times and a fool at others is the truly great man. To be swift as the wind and still as the forest, this the ideal human state. Like the *Mani* jewel of Buddhism, such a man can effortlessly adapt to the situation at hand, creating either fire or water as the occasion demands. We must be both shrewd, and yet simple and innocent as a child. We must have come to know all things, and also have forgotten all things. We must not allow ourselves to be harmed by either our ignorance or our knowledge.
Becoming the sea and the mountains, making the morning and evening, sending the wind and summoning the clouds, revealing the sun and the moon—the many changes of our limitless universe, all are the Divine works of one creator. Because man is a microcosm of the universe, his actions must likewise be versatile, and encompass an immense variety and capacity for change. Our words and actions must

have a lasting significance, and our approach to life must be both meaningful and resilient.
Don't be enslaved by things. Don't be attached to things. Don't be biased towards things. Don't take things as absolute. From one to infinity, all things without exception are neither false nor unnecessary.

All things in this world have their own truth. In no case can this be gainsaid.
We must strive to be broadminded, and avoid judging others on the basis of our own limited selves. Nor should we reach conclusions about the eternal based only on our experience in the present moment.

Each and every person has been granted limitless uncultivated land. Whether this develops into limitless cultivated land or not solely depends upon our own efforts.

Modern man is being used by his machines. He is bound by his money. He is shackled by his schedules. And he is a slave to his trends.
In all things, man—who thinks he must be master—is, on the contrary, a slave to his objects. It is truly deplorable.

**Devote Yourself to What You Believe to be Your Very Best.**

It is a pleasure just to see a man, filled with hope, who seeks wisdom and advancement.
In unpleasant times one must contrive to divert oneself using one's surroundings.
No matter what the situation, to anger others and cause unpleasantness is wholly without merit. We must strive to make both ourselves and others happy.
Happiness brings happiness, unhappiness draws unhappiness.

It is a sin to leave things undone. To cling to an unchangingly stagnant spiritual and physical state is truly reprehensible.
This world is in a constant state of flux; the cessation of change brings certain decay and collapse. Like water flowing smoothly and unceasingly, there is nothing more pleasant than to follow one's own course without hesitation. This is the true way to live.

The most worthwhile means of living is simply to do as one pleases. Mankind's nature belongs to heaven and earth; perfection is the aim of the universe. Therefore, to do as one sees best is the true way to self-perfection. Though there are those who think that to do as one pleases is the root of all evil, this is a great mistake.

That which is not accepted by society, nor tolerated by the world, should never be desired by man. Though one may once have wished for such a thing, with time one comes to see the truth of the matter.

Having pondered deeply, I find this to be true: there is no greater happiness than to wholly devote oneself moment-by-moment to what one believes is one's best.
Of course, one's present best is not at all the same as one's potential best, but this is only natural. Though the level of one's best effort changes infinitely, if only one is true to one's own present self, one will have no cause for regret.

If we come to dislike a task, it is often because we are being forced to do it. If this strain builds up, it is bound to result in our collapse.

In eight or nine cases out of ten our expectations fail to be met.
In view of this, one must be able to adjust to one's changing circumstances. There is no one more difficult to deal with than the hidebound, narrow-minded, and inflexible man.

When own lives are in disorder, the entire world seems to be in a chaotic state.
We never receive undeserved punishment or reward.
No matter how much we devote ourselves to good acts while thinking ill of others, we can never achieve self-purification.
What we achieve is no more than what we think and what we do.

People have an irrepressible tendency towards materialistic thinking, and because we are restless and impatient as well, a great number of us inflict suffering upon our own hearts.
The Japanese, especially, who have been confined so long in this narrow island country, are impatient and do everything too hastily. If a job requires a little perseverance they are quickly daunted, and because they are not broad-minded enough to plan for the distant future they wind up in trouble. Jumping about in joy over a trivial success, and then wilting and becoming crestfallen over a minor failure—in this way we can never hope to accomplish truly great work. We must act according to our careful consideration of when we should work and when we should rest.
Because eighty or ninety percent of today's people are neurotic, they spend twenty-six hours a day vainly fretting and fidgeting in their anxiety. And since these people worry themselves over the affairs of others and constantly clamor at others' sides with their urgings and advice, the only work they manage to accomplish is neurotic as well.

Morally speaking, people are by no means wholly good, nor yet are they completely bad, either.

If the world could only be at peace, then people's hearts would become tranquil, and those who needlessly cheat and steal would vanish. However, those who envy and distrust others would not completely disappear.

One must not feel in the slightest way the desire to be thought well of by others, nor wish to appear in a good light to one's fellow men.
The one gallon container will hold a gallon, while the one pint container will hold but a pint.
In the words of a proverb, "Moderation is the best form of medicine."
If we can only command the restraint not to glut ourselves 100 percent—stopping instead at eighty percent—without question, this is true refinement.
Such restraint is essential in all things. However, it must not be forced, but rather must come naturally.

In everything we do, we must not feel in the slightest bit that our actions are virtuous or right.
Avoiding such feelings we must go about all things naturally and smoothly.

Unless we do things out of our own volition, we are not honestly doing them, but are subject to the manipulations of others.
In such cases we do not display our own true selves, and are really no better than puppets.

## Self-Cultivation to Our Final Moment

Until one has reached a considerable age and has risen to a fair station in life, one cannot accomplish one's true work.
Even though young people may possess a slightly superior talent, when they demonstrate this people will not readily accept it. Should such a person be taken on by a superior and promoted to a higher rank, their colleagues and others still will not be easily impressed.
Also, if one has no official position, then no matter how meritorious one's words and actions are, people will not judge one solely by these, but will discount one on the basis of one's status, age, and lineage.
Looking around the world, those people who are highly esteemed by their fellows are actually more numerous than those who are famous, but unfortunately, because they have achieved no fame, these people are often ill-treated by others.

When the troubles of others are conveyed to us, we are apt to feel troubled as well. However, depending upon our individual strength of character, this can to some extent be controlled.
However, if everyone around you is grieving, it is hardly appropriate

for you alone to remain indifferent.
The suffering of others is to a certain degree one's own suffering, and the happiness of others is to some extent one's own happiness. Following this line of thought, unless our joys and sorrows are shared, this world will not know true happiness.

Though we think and plan various things for the future, humans are essentially creatures of the present. Danger over, our fears are soon forgotten, and in the depths of winter we cannot remember summer's heat.
To follow the shallow way of thinking of most men and forcefully go through with things as originally planned, regardless of the situation, is a grave mistake.

On the whole, mankind's intellect is a highly imperfect thing, and in looking at various people's particular way of thinking we find great disparity. Therefore we must never swallow the opinions of others whole, without thinking for ourselves.
Children in today's schools are conditioned to take every statement of their seniors as the absolute truth. However, this will come to have an extremely harmful effect in later years, because young people will lack sufficient critical ability, and so their preconceptions and failure to question things will result in them holding biased views.
All things around us in this world are no more than reference points for own selves.
Absolute truth, as such, is in no way something which is plainly revealed. What we now see before our eyes is no more than a small part of the whole truth. Such a small part is by no means an absolute truth.
Above all, our hidebound way of thought regarding law and custom is a great problem.
We must at all costs consider our social institutions by using man's spirit as a basis.
Water moves without cease. Time passes without cease. With the passing of time, the face of the truth shifts.
Summer is the time to wear light clothing, winter the time to wear many layers. Even so, there is no law regulating the number of layers of clothing a person must wear. Nevertheless, essentially all of the laws and regulations of our modern world are expressed in the sense that one "must do something." As people's clothing changes with the different seasons, so for different people there naturally should be greatly different laws. This is because for each individual person the cause and effect of a particular situation can hardly be expected to be the same.

If we could only behave in a natural manner, we would be in harmony

with the truth, but instead modern man insists on fettering himself with the making of various regulations and schemes.

It is a great mistake to think that by educating any given person we can impart to them the ability to do absolutely anything. No matter how vigorously one rubs a rock, it will not turn into a gem. Yet even a precious stone, if left covered with dirt, will appear to people to be no more than a clod of earth.
Because each of us has been blessed by God with a spiritually good nature, if we spend our lives in cultivating this nature with all our strength, such effort alone is enough. This is the task of man.

### Producing the Driving Force for Advancement

Trust is an infinite and limitless treasure. If one has merely trust and nothing else, one can still accomplish anything and receive permission to do anything. If one does not command trust, on the other hand, no matter how great one's skill and knowledge are they will be of no avail. In order to win the trust of others one must possess adequate enthusiasm and sincerity. Enthusiasm and sincerity are what touch the hearts of others. By no means can this be accomplished through mere skill and learning.
A great number of today's youth, forgetting this ironclad rule of trust, blindly believe the cultivation of the intellect to be the ideal goal in life—this is truly a great shame.
Actions performed with the aim of engendering the trust of others are already impure in of themselves. Only by forgetting ourselves and rendering service purely for the sake of others will our actions be truly appreciated for the first time. However, this can hardly be accomplished within the limitations of our usual intentions. Unless our intentions are unusually pure, we will never come to realize everlasting spiritual wealth. Moreover, without such spiritual wealth, we cannot hope to accomplish our true [eternal] work.

Because a sliding door is constantly being restrained from above and below, thus is it able to stand upright and move properly. If there were no sill and lintel to hold it in, the door could not stand or slide. Because as human beings we have been bestowed with an appropriate measure of discomfort, unhappiness, and restriction in life, these hardships have become part of the nature of our functioning, and if we were to become completely free of them not a single bit of work would get done. First of all, our will to work would never materialize, just as water upon a flat surface remains absolutely motionless. Water on a slope, however, unavoidably begins to move with a speed corresponding to the steepness of the incline. Depending upon its

degree of movement it has the power to do a tremendous amount of work. Likewise, in response to the unceasing dissatisfaction that is the lot of man, we labor to satisfy and remedy our discontent, and thus do we advance and make progress.
However, if the sill and lintel are warped or too tight, the sliding door will become stuck, or even break. Likewise, if we suffer too much uncomfortable restriction and unhappiness we will find ourselves in an untenable situation.

There is a saying that "great talents are slow to mature." Even among animals, the longer the period of their maturation the more advanced and long-lived they will be. For a thing to be quickly established in form is hardly desirable. In recent times, as the world becomes ever more narrow and hectic, people are proportionately growing up in a shorter time, and children tend to quickly become adults. People really should work at self-cultivation at least until the age of thirty before venturing out to make their way in the world. One must be in the prime of one's life around the age of fifty or sixty.
Child prodigies are aberrations—no matter how gifted a child may be, without knowledge and experience of the world, he can hardly be expected to accomplish any true work. If one has not yet at least experienced married life, one is not yet qualified as a true human. Man is the noblest creature on this earth. Those who do not possess the qualifications of humankind, be they even divine beings, will be imperfect on the surface of this world.

In the changing of one's way of thinking or the embarking upon a new course in life, rather than being accomplished through human thought and endeavor, such changes are often brought about by some hidden power. With inventions or discoveries, or even major wars, often some little-known force entered into the matter and deeply influenced its outcome.

Man's fate does not follow his expectations, but is susceptible to the influences of a variety of things. Our environment, particularly, has a strong effect upon us. We must always take seriously such hidden influences and forces in our lives.
The most important things in our lives come from our environment and from heaven. Likewise, the power that saves us from spiritual impasse and which guides us in life flows down to us from above, or comes to us from our surroundings. Thus, just as the universe moves according to a divinely ordered will, and as the earth moves in harmony with it also, so too must humanity act in accordance with this divine order.
Even though science is progressing at a considerable rate these days, and people are rapidly becoming learned, when a number of these

people get together and attempt various things, they make no progress and events rarely proceed as they plan. This is because they make no attempt to act in harmony with the divinely ordered will of the universe, and all of their theorizing is nothing but gibberish to the ears of God.
Though one may think to oneself, “I’ll become this...”, or “I’ll become that...”, there is not a single person who has ever been able to construct their own life in such a way. This is because outside of our own conscious will there is a deeper source which manipulates the threads of our destiny. This source controls the vicissitudes of fate on an individual, a family, and a national level, as well as the workings of all of humanity and the universe. This is a matter of fact, not of theory. Such is the nature of this world.
Contemplating this, we must at least give some thought to our relation to the greater power and Divine will—the force which pulls the strings that move us. When we begin to come in contact with this force in even the slightest amount, our way of seeing the world around us will change. Rather than continuing to follow our limited and transitory way of thinking—based upon good and evil, suffering and pleasure in the present moment—our thoughts will become grounded in the eternal and the universal.
In this way, though we suffer hardship and loss in the present, because we come to realize that such suffering is merely a temporary state enabling us to construct a better future, our hardship cannot cause us the slightest bit of grief.

To imitate others is useless. To act heedlessly in spite of one’s inabilities is unwise.
It is no good to go over one’s work pondering over whether one is exceptional or not. Regardless of whether one is better or worse than others, it is best to simply act for oneself.
Our enslavement to status and rank in our absurd society, our devotion of all our efforts to maintaining this status, and our ridiculous disposition towards always trying to save face—none of these will do.
To abandon such concerns without regret, and, with our hearts renewed to a childlike state, act appropriately to the extent of our abilities—this is ideal.

The celestial being newly descended from heaven, unaccustomed to the circumstances of this world, will at first commit nothing but blunders. The evil being from hell will be avaricious, and in spite of his cunning in the ways of evil, people will come to abhor him.
In this world where good and evil are inseparable, unless we become well versed in the ways of both, we will—as though using the sword

of Masamune to cut tofu or a sewing needle to split a boulder—be apt to repeat our folly again and again.
Treating the man of evil as befits a man of evil, and dealing with the man of good as is suitable to such a type, in this manner we must negotiate our relations with our fellow men.
By no means can hope to grasp the true inner workings of things merely through the use of theory. There is no other way but to face reality oneself, and so arrive at understanding. Therefore, the scholars, ideologists, and men of literature have no real power, no courage, and are irresolute.
Even the man who knows nothing of systematic theory, if he has encountered many varied situations, times, and people, he will in some way both possess a great weight of character and wield a profound influence on others.
Without experiencing the privations of human life, one cannot become a heavenly being. Without savoring the full flavor of this world it is impossible to truly know it.
Without knowing anything of humanity, or of the nature of the earth, we cannot hope to enter into the workings of this world in even the slightest way.

It's useless to ask a frog to cluck like a chicken, or to expect a cuckoo to sing like a lark. Because all things have their own true nature, if we always dispute this nature then the world cannot know complete harmony.
The willow allows even a ill wind to caress its branches—nor does the wind blow merely to please the willow tree. Even rats help eradicate the mites which cause so many human diseases. We cannot always expect to know what kind of service something is truly performing.
Let things be as they really are!
Let things become as they will!

## Don't Encase Yourself in a Hard Shell

While making money, machines, time, places, books, laws, expectations, memories, and various other things, mankind himself has come to be unceasingly oppressed by these very creations. As master, it is to be expected that all things must be subordinate to man, but the true situation is actually completely opposite, and the 'master' is often set to work in the service of his myriad things.
Concerning all etiquette and convention and such, we must at one level deeply reflect upon the extent to which they corrode our hearts and enslave us. All of this corruption and restraint results from our being caught up in superficialities. Instead of making our own true nature the center of our life, we go about our daily existence propped

up by external falsehoods.
However, this is not to say that we cannot cure internal distortion through the use of outward criteria. Environment clearly makes the man, nor can the transformative power of external habit be denied. Even so, to go against what is natural, on the other hand, is apt to amount to nothing at all.
Walking around everywhere like a snail, burdened by a heavy shell—there is no one more intractable than such a person as this.

Laying a straw mat on the ground, it is interesting to play house:
“Is anyone home?”
“Welcome. Please come on in.”
“It’s only simple fare, but please have something to eat.”
“It’s delicious.”
“You forgot to bring me a gift.”
“Hey, you’re not supposed to say that to your guest!”
“But, still, you forgot, didn’t you…?”
“All right, let’s try again from the start.”
“Is anyone home?”
“Welcome. Please come on in.”
“Here’s a gift. Please give it to Mi-chan.”
“Oh my. This looks special!”

This is the world of two children,
The most interesting and pleasant world there is.
Why is it so interesting?
Reason has no place here.

Smiling, without engaging in argument, like an infant loved by all around—such a person I like best.

# Part III.— A Way of Life Awakened to Love

**Don't Try to Show Off Your Merits**

Only a fool treats an idiot with seriousness.

To speak ill of another in earnest only attests to one's own weakness and smallness.

We must avoid adopting a rigidly critical attitude towards what those around us say.
Simply, if we could just accept things unconditionally as they are, as information for us to take in, this would be quite good. Then, in the due course of time, we may come to understand their true significance, and apprehend the nature of right and wrong, good and bad.

People are apt to think such things as "I am better than my neighbor." No matter whether in truth he is superior or inferior to his neighbor, a person who thinks of himself in this way has little hope of commanding any respect from his fellow men.
In all cases we must be careful to avoid injuring the dignity [pride?] of others. In dealing with the foolish and obstinate person, we must exercise still more care, striving as much as possible to make them happy, and to advance together hand-in-hand.
Because humans are highly prone to become angry or jealous over trifling matters, we must be truly careful.

We become angry because we feel that we are special.

In every case, because we are always preoccupied only with our own weaknesses and faults, we become overly sensitive towards the most trivial matters. If one has no particular reason to be ashamed, then no matter who one is around one should not feel even the slightest worry. To a great extent, unless we constantly reflect upon even the most mundane matters we are apt to become egocentric, noticing only the faults of others and failing to understand our own natures in the least. If we compare ourselves to our fellows, and they are inferior to us to even the slightest extent, then we become overwhelmed with joy, thinking to ourselves, " Hmmm, I'm really special, aren't I?". Thus we remain completely oblivious to reality, and the majority of us fail to notice our extreme inferiority to others in many important areas.

It is wrong to try to present yourself to others as more than you really are. You must have the courage to expose yourself as you truly are. What's more, at times you must be perfectly content to be seen as inferior to your true nature.

I have thoroughly come to realize that it is truly rash to quickly label someone as good or bad, likable or despicable, based merely upon the observations of a single meeting.
I have also come to see that because first impressions have a great impact upon people, we become caught up in them and are often unable to clearly observe our fellow men.

Ever increasing creation, growth, and advancement is the work of God. Destruction, depletion, and regression are the work of the devil. Therefore, in even our most trivial daily affairs we must always maintain a progressive outlook. To worry and hesitate unnecessarily and always act in an overly conservative manner, on the other hand, is to go against the will of God. As it is absolutely imperative to reflect upon our selves; if we fail to do this then we unwittingly fall into the way of evil.
Because we are always happy to see an increase in our daily friendships and are delighted when we receive a letter, we should mutually increase such liaisons, and so share this joy with one another. One should always reply to letters promptly. As much as possible we should visit each other frequently and with camaraderie. And if one meets a person, one should be sure to exchange pleasant words with them.
At any rate, unless we eliminate feelings of prejudice, doubt, envy, and selfishness, we cannot expect this world to ever become pure. We must always remember that all people are equally good and interdependent.

Speak and act in the manner that comes most naturally. In this way all your actions will be properly courteous.
Of course there are times when we must give our words and actions careful thought. However, to only “think” intellectually is in itself misleading. Thinking too much only leads us astray. It is best to live like the smoothly flowing river-water.

The man who is equal to any task is the truly great man.

## Mingling Together Like Clear Water

Respect individuality.
No matter who the person, one must not underestimate them on first meeting. There is nothing that angers people more than when they feel they have been insulted.
Therefore, we must be extremely careful not to display speech or behavior that might be deemed insulting by others.
This is a very important rule for the conduct of life.

Because the average person is highly self-centered and unfailingly gives all of his attention only to the areas where he is superior to others, he will be quick to compare himself to his fellows in even the most trivial matters, and if he can find even a single small point in which he is superior he will become swollen with self-importance. If such a person encounters another who is better than him in a particular area, he will at all costs devise a way to find fault with this person, and failing this, he will most likely regard him with extreme umbrage.
No matter what his line of work, for a person to gain public acclamation he must first undergo a certain amount of hardship. However, once he makes a name for himself, people will praise him for no real reason at all. Were they not to do this, they would be deemed out of fashion and absurd, and besides, since everyone else is praising this person, they can hardly be ridiculed for joining in. If we reflect thoroughly upon this insidious thought process, such people come to seem truly repulsive.
Ours is a world of narrow-minded people, full of nothing but insincere and self-important talk. Thus it is only natural that it has become such a suffocating place. Although outwardly we pretend to be pure, deep in our hearts we are always envious of each other—this is a great shame. The desire to avoid having others think ill of us is always the first thing to come to our minds. Even in paying close attention to the clothing of others, our essential motive in doing so is merely to compare ourselves with them. Disregarding what others may think, follow the path you yourself believe in—if only more people possessed such an attitude as this!
If a person is filled with the desire to have their “superiority” acknowledged by others, then they are in fact forgetting the very means by which any measure of superiority may be attained, and so they put themselves in an untenable situation.
In all situations, there is no one we should pity more than the person who does not know even the slightest peace of mind.

A sharp and caustic personality is the most unpleasant of all. The warm and amicable person I like best of all.

Because as humans we must coexist with one another for better or for worse, we ought to live together with open hearts, peaceful relations, and mutual happiness.
We must not feel unwarranted suspicion towards someone on first meeting them, nor feel inclined to test their character. Instead we must be mutually trusting and respect each individual equally.
In all this world there is nothing more pleasant than a small and happy group of open-hearted close friends.

It is a great mistake to hastily judge a person as wise or foolish, kind or callous, simply on the basis of their outward experience and their passing behavior towards one.
“The relations of petty men are sweet and sticky as honey, while the relations of men of virtue are candid and clear as water” runs an old saying. No matter how much a self-centered person’s relations with others may seem cordial on the surface, the second his interests appear to be threatened, he will become openly hostile. On the other hand, simple friendly relations which are free from ulterior motives, while they may superficially appear to be lacking in intimacy, will actually last through thick and thin. This is because human relations originally consisted of material and spiritual exchange free from any personal objective.
The superficially-minded man observes and judges everything in a shallow manner, while the introspective man views and assesses everything in a profound way. However, though one person may believe his thinking to be deeply introspective, another may look upon it as utterly shallow.
If we hope to be at harmony with one another we must first come to know and understand one another. In this way, we can for the first time discover each other’s standpoints, and relate to each other with security and harmony. This does not merely hold true for relations between humans, but also holds true for man’s dealings with animals, plants, and all other living things.
If we wish to better know and understand one another, we must first become more intimate and tolerant in our relations with each other. With all things, being careful to cause no injury, we must keep in mind our mutual good and benefit. There are no doubt many materialistically minded people who fear that to give their own possessions to others will immediately result in their own loss and suffering, but these people are simply caught up in a very partial and limited approach to life. Looking at things in a more long-term way, everything we give to others extends the breadth of our own possessions, and the fruits of these gifts unfailingly come back to us. From simply a materialistic and time-concerned point of view, the results of our good deeds do not return to us immediately as we

perform them. Therefore, a person's true wealth is wholly determined by the amount of good will and friendliness he bears towards all around him. Then, if many people invest their individual assets together in a common enterprise they can achieve great works and receive many benefits and good fortune.

## Appropriate Action

Because feelings are the basis for everyone's actions, in our relations with others we must always try to be in touch with their emotions. We must neither fail to consider the feelings of others nor put forth our belief in our own righteousness.
In the world in general, what we like to call love and wisdom is not true divine love and wisdom. We mistake our narrow-minded attachments for love and our self-centered cleverness (or "clever ways") for wisdom.

When we stop and consider our own past, we soon find that we must forgive the varying degrees of immaturity, shamelessness, arrogance, self-centeredness and such that we see in our fellow men. Whenever we recall just how much we have exhibited these traits in the past, we find that we must sympathize with those who currently display them, and we realize that we are hardly in a position to blindly and superciliously scold these people and urge them to reform. Everyone is at first immature, shameless, arrogant, and wholly selfish.

To be able to fully understand another person's mental and emotional state, and to show appropriate empathy, is essential for everyone. At all events, to bluntly hurt another's feelings is reprehensible. Thinking about our own cases, we can easily understand why this is.
The man who is able to deal with everything harmoniously is truly admirable. Unless one has become worldly-wise and experienced much hardship, such ability is extremely difficult to achieve.

The man of broad experience is the superior man. No matter how well read a person is, this is essentially no more than the memorization of words, and compared to the man who has deeply experienced the deadly earnestness of life, such a literary person is wholly without substance.
Both in matters of good and of evil, the more first hand experience a man has, the greater his competence and humanity.

No matter how noble a person's innate spirit, if they fail to make any human effort they are worthless in this world.

Each person is distinctly different from those around him. Yet all people share numerous points in common as well.
Forcibly meddling in the affairs of others is a great mistake. It is also deeply wrong to leave the drowning man to drown.

The person who in all things avoids going against the wishes of others, and is weak-willed and subservient, is essentially no more than a gullible fool and a good-for-nothing.

There are many people in this world of exemplary conduct and ironclad morals. But if these are the sort who when faced by superiors no better than a dog or pig say not a word in criticism or complaint, they can hardly amount to more than cramped and narrow-minded people. They are not the sort to perform any work of great consequence.
The basis of one's greatness is dependent on the quality and breadth of the spirit one has received from heaven, not upon one's artificial status and activities.
The force of the wrath of the man of broad spirit cannot be compared to that of the common man.

In the world in general, what we like to call love and wisdom is not true divine love and wisdom. We mistake our narrow-minded attachments for love and our self-centered cleverness (or "clever ways") for wisdom.
Such mistaken love and wisdom has a certain power, but it belongs without exception to the realm of the infernal. Though the love and wisdom of heaven and of hell may at first glance appear similar, in truth they are at absolute odds to one another.

There is no one more despicable than he who says the opposite of what he thinks, approaching others with an attitude of self-serving flattery. It is better to be even somewhat offensive to another, rather than to act in such an obsequious manner. To freely express one's true thoughts—this is ideal.
There is nothing more repulsive than when two people try to probe at each others' innermost thoughts and intentions.
Even modesty must be curtailed at times, or else one will instead seem rude. Say 'yes' when you mean yes, and 'no' when you mean no—though this may be temporarily unpleasant for another, their feelings will soon clear up, and both parties will be the happier for it.

## Don't Be Enslaved By Ideology

On the whole, those who fawn upon their superiors tend to be particularly cruel to their subordinates. A self-centered and superficially amicable relationship is liable to quickly turn into one of bitter enmity.
One may spend an entire day in silence with a member of one's family and not mind a bit, but to do this with a stranger is likely to lead to mutual suspicion and prejudice. Within one's family, everyone relates smoothly and freely with one another without constraint. Conversely, with two strangers, because both are guarded, reserved, and constantly concerned with showing themselves in a good light, even

their most insignificant words and actions cast a dark pall upon their relations.
Young children are superior to adults in this respect, and because they exist wholly without ambition, they are completely free from fear. Since their behavior springs directly from their true feelings, they neither deceive themselves nor do they misinterpret the words of others.
For those who hold a secret or a weak spot within, their paranoia breeds demons. They come to harbor a self-created shadow deep in their hearts, and so their lives are filled with fear and suffering.
Wisdom and foolishness aside, the true man of virtue is he who all people naturally feel at ease around, and who, though inaccessible at first, grows on one with every meeting.

If those in a position of authority lack the ability to clearly judge others, already the doom of the organization is sealed.
If we come to realize, “Ah, so this is how the world works,” then we will never be excited or disturbed by trivialities or whether something is good or bad. The world consists simply of the actual state of things as they are, and the changes in this state.
All people possess compassion and mercy. They simply only possess these to the degree of their own advancement. Because God’s mercy is boundless, it is not readily comprehended by man.
We must not put our intellect before all else, nor try to accomplish things by force. Leaving things to nature, we must strive in a wholly unconstrained manner. Yet, to strive at all is already in part a manifestation of shallow human intellect. Let things develop as they will.
He who wholeheartedly invokes God will without fail be uplifted. If one is uplifted in this way, one will naturally come to know the true way of thinking, and one’s way of looking at things will evolve.

Those who are narrow-minded become strangely suspicious at even the most trivial of things, and tend to see everything in a bad light. Such small-mindedness can amount to nothing. In all things, to look upon the actions of others with good will is the divine path.
To earnestly absorb oneself in shallow and petty emotional conflict is beneath criticism.
It is difficult to trust the nervous/restless person in the slightest bit. This is because such a person, though quick to make promises, is likely to readily double-cross one as well.
Because people are without fail egocentric and nearsighted, they tend to become perplexed and upset by even the most inconsequential matters.

One who holds a position of responsibility, above all must reflect with

great care upon his words and actions. This is because what one thoughtlessly does and says has far-reaching consequences on a great number of people.
If a group's leaders are coarse, narrow-minded, and careless, already that group is hopelessly doomed to failure. If even a few of these leaders are clear-minded and reliable, however, then any kind of work at all may be easily accomplished.

If one relies too heavily on one's superiors, one will come to lack self-reliance, and if one relies too heavily upon oneself, one's mightiest efforts will be in vain. A true leader will not simply instruct an underling, but will skillfully induce him to come to an understanding of the matter on his own.

Most people live in a prison of ideology, all the while cackling about each other's stupidity.
Scientists are enslaved by their science, and religious folk have fallen into superstition. Scientists are quick to say, "that is not rational!" So, bound by mistaken reason, and taking joy only in mere theories, they are forever being flustered by reality. Religious people are always quick to say, "If you do such a thing, you will call God's wrath down upon your head!" So, while in truth acting in a manner bound to offend God, they go about thinking that they are actually doing good. All in all, there is none free from the fetters of human thinking, save for the newborn babe.

Because people are by nature hardly more than masses of egotism and self-interest, one must always start by pleasing one's fellow man in order to get anywhere. Unless we are able to impress upon others that we can be of benefit to them, it is very difficult to accomplish anything.
However, we must not let ourselves get carried away, showing the mean and petty man unmerited benevolence. Striving to be wholly impartial, we must relate to each person in a manner appropriate to them. Unless one does this, one will attract a swarm of toadies to one's side, and come to be in a truly hopeless state. Looking beyond merely a person's superficial words and actions, we must clearly discern the workings of their heart and mind.
Unless they are assigned to a particular rank or status, people seem unable to accomplish any work.

Though it may appear that they have just been fighting, in no time at all children will be laughing and playing together again. Such innocence and simplicity is not easily imitated by adults. Every time I see such a scene as this, I cannot help but think that children are truly close to God. I only wish that we adults, in our daily associations with each other, could learn to behave in such a manner.

Because we are only human, at times we get angry or feel irritated. At such times, we cannot help becoming a bit aggressive and hostile. However, it is immensely uncommon for adults to come to understand each other and forgive one another, and be quick to wholly forget what happened earlier, shaking hands as better friends. Because there is always some resentment left to linger on, it is very difficult for us to renew our relations with a pure and fresh spirit.

In our modern world of self-centeredness, since our relations with others are always founded upon our own egocentrism we become resentful and angry over the most trifling matters. It is very common in such cases for us to refuse to forget our grudges, harboring ill will towards each other even after the passage of many years. Even when another person bears no grudge towards us it is not uncommon for us to harbor long-standing resentment towards them while shutting ourselves into our own narrow world. We must by all means work to avoid this, striving to understand one another and exist together in harmony.

If we reflect on things, every person is without doubt someone's child, parent, or sibling. Just as we love our parents, so do others love theirs. Just as we love our children, so do other parents love theirs. And just as we love our brothers and sisters, so do others love theirs.

Those who detest someone because they are the child of another person, mistreat the parents of others because they are not one's own, and shun the siblings of others for the same reason, reveal nothing less than an unspeakably narrow way of thinking. Such people have yet to make any progress in learning to be tolerant of others.

These people do not realize that there is any other way to view the world save through their narrow windows of self-centered prejudice. This is because there are many narrow-minded people who confuse the momentary yielding of selfishness with the eternal renunciation of self-interest.

We must not flatly deny the grievances of our fellow men. Showing sympathy towards their troubles in all matters, we must gradually lead them towards righteousness.

Because everyone can behave like a completely different person simply based on their mood at the time, we must not let our own present mood influence our judgment of others.

Doing our best to understand the feelings of others, while showing sympathy and compassion, we need to guide them in the proper direction.
To make sweeping statements such as, “that’s no good”, or “that’s a lie”, shows at once one’s own hostility. At all times we must strive to fully understand the feelings of those we come into contact with. In order to do this, we ourselves must be able to identify with such feelings through our own personal experience.
Therefore, we must undertake as great a variety of things as we possibly can, meeting with many different situations and accumulating a wealth of personal experience.

Because all things do indeed exist purely through the grace of God, to flippantly denounce something because it is inconvenient to one is truly foolish.
We must have the broad-mindedness to accept our present world as it is, viewing all things with just impartiality.
With all things, those which we have labored for we value most and treat with the greatest care. Those things which we do not like, we treat roughly and carelessly. This is the way all people relate to things. Thinking ‘this is nice”, or ‘this needs to be fixed up” we take great care of the things which we have put work into. This is generally true of our approach to abstract things also.
With conjugal love as well, a love that two people have taken great pains to build up, value, and refine, is truly close and unwavering. Unless one has labored for it to this extent, love is not truly real.
To think in terms of love as merely a sexual bond without such labor is a great mistake. Without fail, a spiritually vacant spot will spring up somewhere. Even with couples whose original relationship was quite close, after five or ten years they are likely to run into some kind of crisis. At first this is glossed over one way or another, but gradually as they grow older they find they cannot keep up this deception. When they become aware of the true nature of love and affection, and realize that there exists a great gap between them in this area, both become cold and lonely.

Unless from the start both people have the strong resolve to cultivate their love, even after marriage things will not go well. This cultivation requires great effort and time. To marry someone on a far higher level than one is sure to result in trouble. The opposite is also likewise true. Even if it is not an ideal match, if it is based on mutual liking, not just on superficial beauty, and there is some sort of meeting of the souls, it will go well.
We must be aware of how to divert our emotions. Because our feelings change in accord with our environment, by going to see a play or

listening to music when we become angry or upset, we may become calm again.
Therefore, everyone should have some sort of hobby or pastime through which they can endeavor to divert themselves when feeling bad.
To engage in frank conversation with another is an even greater pleasure than eating, a true solace and oasis in a life of hardship.
The lives of those who lack such open exchange somehow tend to be prosaic and lonely.

To thoughtlessly blow smoke in the face of someone who hates cigarettes is certainly rude. However, it is hardly rude if someone exhales smoke in the presence of someone who enjoys cigarettes.
To get naked in front of someone who finds nudity vulgar is impolite. Nevertheless, the denizens of highest heaven are believed to run around almost wholly nude.
Our judgment of whether something is properly courteous or whether it is rude is, essentially, not based upon the action itself. It all depends on how the people involved feel about it.

# PART IV. — ACTION CULTIVATES TRUE STRENGTH

**Practice Instead of Theory**

We all know how to theorize. It's just that we can't put anything into practice.

Unless you command broad practical experience, you will never be able to hold a position of leadership.

Try! Reflect! Comprehend!
This is a motto of true benefit.
Because they ceaselessly repeat the same actions over and over again without stopping to reflect at all, a great number of the world's populace remain fools.
For example, in such games as *go* and chess, if you repeatedly play in a thoughtless and reckless fashion, you will make little strategic progress. Even so, your playing of these games will be more skilled than that of the person who does not bother to try them at all.
Since nothing can be accomplished by thinking alone, boldly take matters in hand. If you simply act, one way or another things will work out for the best. This is a rule to live by.
The idealist vainly asserts, "It's not that!", and "It's not this!", his brain churning like the pounding of *mochi*—and so he accomplishes not a single thing. In all the affairs of this world, only by experiencing instead of studying, and by throwing ourselves headlong into life, come to learn and understand matters. The most important thing is to act.
However, because modern education is concerned from the start with merely cramming people's heads with pointless theories, it is creating people who lack the ability to take action, and who have no latent power, only shallow cleverness. This a truly sorry state of affairs. We must come to understand things naturally through the application of reason to our experiences. To move forward with head alone—feet not touching the ground, and hands in pockets—is liable to cause one to fall flat on one's face. The so-called idealist may, in a sense, be summed up by, "the head advancing while the feet stay put." Thus, such people live in a state of constant anguish. They do nothing but fret and fume.
If you take one steady step forward with your foot, your head will naturally follow. But thought unaccompanied by action, and a head unaccompanied by feet, only gives rise to grave danger.
"Don't get mad; act" is a very useful maxim. If you actually have the spare time to get angry at and resent others, you should take this

energy and use it in working for a good cause. If only people work at all things wholeheartedly, learning and understanding as they go, gradually they will gain ability.
There is interest to be found even in the balls of a flea; truth may exist in a sewer drain as likely as anywhere else. To work and to act are things we should take pleasure in. To know any amount of fine theories without actually doing something with them, does not amount to true knowledge, but is merely a knowledge of words.

No matter how fine one's inborn nature, without the accumulation of physical practice it is worthless. Without exception, we must put something into practice at least once in order to persuade ourselves of it. Armchair theory alone can bring no true understanding.
Of course, the spirit comes first and physical practice second—but unless the two are well-balanced, we cannot hope to achieve anything of worth in this world.
Broadly speaking, people receive physical hardships and challenges in proportion to the level of their spiritual aims/mission.

He who says is like a fart. He who does is like a rock.

## Seek With Your Own Self

You actions are not your own unless they spring from true self-knowledge—regardless of whether they appear to be right or wrong from a lofty viewpoint. They are but the actions of a puppet.

If you act from self-knowledge, you will always fully express your true nature. Then, regardless of the outcome of your actions, you will feel no great dissatisfaction. Even in the event of failure, somehow one derives a certain pleasure in thinking of doing better in the future. However, if one's actions fail to spring from self-knowledge, arising instead from other motives/sources, then even if one's endeavor is successful, it will be of no true worth to anyone. Underlying the superficial success, such action is no more than the posturing of a puppet on his stage.

When an endeavor ends in failure, we really need be no more than mildly disappointed. Yet it is our tendency to take regret and reproach (not for our own inadequacy, but directed at others) and pile them upon our backs until we are nigh unto collapse. This is because from the beginning the endeavor was not a course that we pursued through our own thought and hardship, but one that we simply let ourselves be led into.

Therefore, regardless of success or failure, unswayed by the criticism of others, and with true self-awareness at each moment, we must discover our own path with our own eyes, and advance along it with our own feet. If we fail to do this, there can be no true progress and understanding.

However, with most of the people in this world, should someone else run to the West, they will turn in that direction as well; or should someone make a fuss in the East, they will rush off to the East to see what it's all about. Such action is only too common.

True self-knowledge is simply the inflow of divine inspiration into the self. There is nothing more dangerous than to ignore this divine inflow, relying only upon the superficial affairs that lie before our eyes.

If in your innermost heart you cannot accept something, then even should a messenger of God stand before you and urge you to accept, it would be best to refuse. Conversely, if you feel deep in your heart that it is right to do something, should a million people try to dissuade you, it is still best to see it through.

Self-knowledge springs from our own true identity, which generally takes a definite form after we reach maturity. During our childhood, we are already actively being guided and raised by the influence of our higher self, but we have yet to take on a strong individual character.

True self-knowledge comes not from within oneself but directly from

God. Our own observations and experiences are not reliable. And it is dangerous to base our actions on them rather than on the self-knowledge we receive from God.
Among today's youth there are many who believe that merely by skillfully studying the research and experiences of others they have acquired so-called wisdom. However, though the experiences of others may serve as a reference when going through the same situations, by no means can the experiences of others be easily made your own. What you can acquire mastery of is limited to what you have chewed in your own mouth, swallowed with your own throat, and digested with your own stomach.
If you seek things on your own by experiencing various realms one after another, then no matter how difficult the situation you encounter, you will be able to calmly find an appropriate way out, and emerge unperturbed to a safe place. If, however, you are suddenly placed alone in the middle of a world conjured from the searchings of others—what then? Until someone comes along to guide you, you are well and truly lost. You won't even be able to summon up the courage to take a single step forward on your own.
In such a situation, your borrowed faith and wisdom is revealed as but a fleeting sham—lasting no more than a brief instant. You are no better than someone proudly living in a castle built on air. Similarly, there is nothing more dangerous and foolish than to act without self-awareness and conviction, blindly following along behind others.

We must pay no heed to the criticisms and judgments of others, and develop the courage to calmly act in the way we believe to be our utmost best.
It is best to assume that no one truly knows you, other than God.

There is nothing more uncertain than the realization of our hopes. However, because we insist on clinging to unreliable expectations, and unwittingly growing ever more attached to them, then once these hopes are dashed, we will, in proportion to the degree of our attachment to them, be left suffering and at a loss. All the joy and suffering in the world varies according to the degree of our preparation for the worst.
However, people in general are deeply self-centered, and rarely able to meet adversity with calm readiness. Aspiring only to realize personal gain, they are intractable in their selfish and greedy expectations. If only we face events with a truly selfless and thorough readiness, then no matter how poorly events turn, we will not blanch or lose our composure.
With such selfless and thorough readiness, we can see that regardless of a thing's success or failure, or whether it is temporarily

advantageous or not, from a broad viewpoint even our present failures are valuable steps towards success in the long run. It is human nature to become caught up in partial and temporary matters, and so we find ourselves in a state of constant distress and suffering. In order to shake ourselves free of this, we must first manage to firmly grasp our own limitless and eternal nature, and use this as a base from which to view all around us.
The present faults and uglinesses of the self are an essential part of the process towards a self of limitless good and beauty. There's absolutely no need to feel pessimistic or desperate; we need only change our attitude and these feelings will swiftly be replaced by ones of gratitude and benediction. If only we learn to view the present and the limited from such an eternal and boundless standpoint, all things will seem enjoyable, blessed, and full of interest.

Making a shift from a fixed situation to an unfamiliar one involves no small amount of trouble and hardship. But unless we cast off our shells, we cannot receive the light. Failing to take a step outside the confines of our familiar conditions, we will never understand the world. Each of us has many entrenched habits, whose reform takes extreme effort and pains.
When we have climbed to a higher level, and turn to look back below, we can't help but laugh at our former narrow-mindedness and ugliness, and wonder, "How could I have been so childish, shameful, and absurd!?" This may happen again and again without limit. It's the way we gradually advance.

The nature of the cycle of completion is that things do not reach perfection of a sudden, but rather do so gradually and cyclically. For example, when we decide to make something and conceive of it in our minds, that is the first level of completion. Next, by assigning it a shape, we bring it to the second level. Assembling its component materials, and then putting together the framework are the third and fourth levels. In this way the final stage of completion is eventually reached. The perfection of the universe, of course, follows this pattern as well, and we should keep this in mind in even our most trivial actions.
Likewise in seeking knowledge, unless we first understanding things by their overall outline, our efforts will be wholly bootless. Thus, according to this cycle of completion, things gradually move towards true perfection. In education as well, this happens without our realizing it.

It is not at all true that we must devote many long years, or drastically change our circumstances, in order to accumulate practical experience. Those who are right-minded and quick to comprehend are

able to discover in just a single day or hour a path that may take others ten or a hundred years to find. They are also able to engage their full mind and attention, to draw limitless truth from even a small and worthless incident.

Indeed, since time and space originate entirely from our thoughts, then according to the nature of these thoughts a single day may have the value of a hundred years, or only that of a single hour. Therefore, by refusing to live in mediocrity while in this world—using a single hour as though it were a full day or even ten days, and using a single day as though it were a full hundred or even a thousand years—we may live long and spiritually. Accordingly, by finding spiritual advancement through our experience of various circumstances, we may attain in only five or ten years a level that takes others their entire lives.

Let us first boldly step forward, then carefully explore.

To know everything, to know nothing; to appear wholly ignorant, to appear immeasurably wise—this is the ideal state.

## Spurring on the Body

Accept circumstances gracefully. All things have their reason, so don't grumble and complain. In a word, this is simply the way things are. Stoutheartedly, no matter your current situation, you must get back upon your feet; you must not become discouraged. Most important for this is having faith. Unless the dynamo of your faith is strong, it will be very difficult to regain your feet, and even having done so you will soon become disheartened again.

Therefore, you must equip yourself with a dynamo of faith, and know how to care for it and use it. All of this is essential. It may sound a simple matter, and in theory it is quite plain and clear, but in a pinch it is hardly such an easy matter.

Rather than simply enduring difficulties passively, let us accept them with gratitude. If we start by feeling thankful for our hardships, rather than simply bearing them in helpless resignation, we will then develop a positive attitude.

Why must we feel gratitude? We did not create this world, nor are we able to create so much as a single drop of water. Air, soil, sunshine—all these we receive from a greater power wholly beyond the influence of mankind. Even the development of our own knowledge occurs through our asking others about that which we do not understand: receiving the teachings of masters, reading books, or benefiting from the prevailing culture of the time. These are the essential means to intellectual growth.

Thus we must discard the urge to do things solely on our own. Unless we do so, we will be unable to know true feelings of gratitude. In nine cases out of ten, we must be aware that we have been helped by others.

Once we come to know feelings of gratitude, an opportunity for reciprocation will follow. Merely clasping your hands while entertaining thankful feelings is not enough. If you feel gratitude for having benefited from the help of others, then you must strive to repay the debt you owe to heaven, your parents, and your fellow men. Unless you have accomplished something for the sake of the earth, cultivated something, and left behind at least a small mark of your time here, then your birth into this world will have had no meaning. You will die a good-for-nothing louse.

Aren't first impressions perhaps more correct than we realize?

With familiarity, we are no longer able to clearly judge matters. Caught up in something, we cannot truly perceive it.

In this sense, the dissatisfaction felt by youth regarding society is extremely pure, but as they gradually become inured to the world and caught up in mundane matters, they lose this clarity of spirit.

Idealism divorced from reality is a castle built on sand. Without a firm foundation, one cannot hope to build a stable house.
If neglect the small step in the present moment, you can go nowhere.
The young and inexperienced are apt to do nothing but spout theory, thinking themselves well-learned, when in truth there is not a single thing they are capable of. A true master of an art will appear lacking in any great erudition.

The only way to go about things is by forming a personal resolve to action. No matter how much others ply you with advice, until you can agree with what is suggested, you should continue on according to your own convictions.
Since even external restrictions, from a broad point of view, are bestowed by God, it is best that we make the best of our situations patiently, and without chafing. If we fail to find such patience through the understanding that all things come from God—and instead think "I hate this! I hate this!" while piling up evil in our hearts—then the poisonous thought "I hate this!" will stifle us inside, while injuring all around us.
We often tend to bear a lump of ill-feeling deep in our hearts. In failing to reflect fully upon our inner selves, we do not realize that this ill-feeling is the reason why we find everything unpleasant, and we instead blame those around us. Because people tend to be incorrigibly self-centered, they are apt to thoughtlessly blame others without realizing that it is their own lack of understanding which is at fault. No matter where they go or what their circumstances, such people can never know true happiness. Only their degree of discontent and displeasure varies with change in place and situation. This is because their spirits reside in the infernal.
However, since we all tend to be creatures of vanity by nature, unless we are humbled by a truly bitter learning experience, we will never realize that the fault lies with us. If we find our present circumstances unpleasant, and so set about to escape them, we will find ourselves in an even worse situation than before. And so again we turn to something else. But things are still just as difficult. At this point we finally realize that our original situation was actually something to be grateful for. From then on, even if we return to those original circumstances, we will at last know composure, and will understand that no matter how difficult things are, we must patiently persevere. If, in turning to a wholly new situation, we find in it far greater happiness than before, then of course nothing could be better than this. Since following your instincts and satisfying your inmost spirit by attempting something will not sully your heart, then rather than always worrying and vacillating it is best to make a clear decision and be at peace.

Follow the principle of "Experience rather than study". If you have the leisure to spout various petty arguments, you should simply shut up and pliantly set about taking action. Today's young students are quite skillful at polemic, but in actual practice they are often found to be unable to do a single thing properly.

There is nothing wrong with scholarship. The problem lies with people's attitudes. Not just with scholarship, but with fortune, social status, talent, and looks as well, so long as we take pride in such possessions we are wholly unable to receive any true spiritual advancement or Divine blessing. But there is nothing wrong with having such backgrounds or possessions. On the contrary, the more assets we have, the more we can take positive action in all areas. It all simply depends upon our individual intentions.

Armchair logic is plain and easy. But in actual practice things are complex and delicate, and it soon becomes keenly apparent that trifling theories are of no use. Though having read a million books about sugar, the person who has never tasted it will be no closer to understanding its flavor than before. He who has practiced swimming atop a bench for years will still quickly drown in deep water.

Those who wish to taste deeply of life should immerse themselves in a great many different experiences. This is the only way. However, ordinary people like you and I are liable to be encumbered by our backgrounds and trivial possessions, becoming indolent, arrogant, and ungrateful. Thus, those who gain distinction after being raised in prosperous circumstances are rare—in eight or nine cases out of ten, such distinguished people are those who have overcome adversity and endured great hardship in their lives.

We are by nature lazy. Knowing full well that we should do this or that, and meeting with favorable circumstances to do so, we somehow still fail to take any action. We tend to put things off until the very last minute, when we can no longer avoid them. Because we are filled with a deep inclination towards self-absorption, we are apt to avoid any unpleasant self-exertion at all costs.

Therefore, we should develop the habit of spurring ourselves on without cease, doing what must be done, and accomplishing our tasks one after another. When doing something one believes must be done, to the best of one's ability, even though one is suffering greatly in mind and body, deep in one's heart there arises an inexpressible feeling of invigoration and happiness.

Act! Act widely! Act unhesitatingly! Act unflaggingly!

Without acting you will know nothing, gain nothing, and understand nothing.

## Experiencing Varied Circumstances

We must act boldly, even if it be wrongly, when action is called for. We must be able to regenerate ourselves at the appropriate time. There is none more unreliable than the aimlessly nervous and anxious man.
Today's world is swarming with such petty men. No matter how fine their outer appearance, deep inside they are fickle, and easily seen through.
Unless we are able at times to be hot-tempered, we can accomplish no work. The sort of person who does nothing but gripe and complain without any discernible point is no better than pond scum.
The usual moralizers and the like, while for the most part existing in a cowardly and acquiescent state, are also quite stiff and prim in their righteousness. The great robbers Ishikawa Goemon and Nezumi Kozo were far more honest men.

When hungry, it's best to eat; when sick, to see a doctor; when sweaty, to take a bath; when sleepy, to go to bed. The country person prefers the city; the city person, the country. The Bachelor of Arts would rather be a Ph.D.; the poor would rather be rich. Such desires are self-evident, and if attained by justifiable means, nothing can be better, for it is mankind's nature to spend his life toiling for these things.
However, among the world's superstitious religionists there have been many who have self-righteously exhorted that we must, "Throw away all physical pleasures and fervently serve God."
These people have only known one side of life, and fail to see the other. To intentionally torture oneself—of what use is this as atonement?
There is none more admirable than he who sacrifices himself to travel throughout the world. But to labor at something which is not in accord with Divine will, out of a sort of superstition, will only draw the wrath of God.

Without trying many things, you will never understand many things. From first to last, great beauty to great ugliness, there are many things to be found on this earth. Therefore, if we wish to accomplish significant work during our time here, we must seek out a wide range of experiences while we are still young
However, while young we are apt to be cocky. Having completed a minor task, we think we are already full-grown, and look down upon our fellows—neglecting to cultivate any true ability. Without realizing it, we all come to believe that what we are thinking and saying is absolutely correct, and it is very difficult for us to frankly accept the words of others. Before having reached the age of thirty, even the wisest of men cannot really hope to have a full understanding of the

world. Therefore, before reaching this age we must be deeply aware that all things hold a lesson for us. Patiently reflecting on even small matters, we must strive to use everything towards the elevation of our spirit.

In order to develop sound judgment, we must cultivate the habit of comparing all things. Because we exist in a world which is limitlessly broad in all directions, we must not become tied to just one small area. One by one we must observe, compare, and criticize all things, and then strive to penetrate to their essence. It is human nature to be a slave to time, and to become caught up in one particular place—but no matter how long we continue in such a way, we will never be able to perceive the reality of this world, nor distinguish good, nor recognize beauty.

The cause of success or failure is a truly elusive matter. It cannot be ascertained at all merely from a person's character and talent. Even among those people with more than enough power/strength to succeed in this world, a great many have amounted to nothing.

We cannot judge a person by his talent or character. Success or failure does not rely on talent and character but on a certain delicate subtle state of mind. Many people have the ability to attain worldly success but reach the end of their lives without any. For example, even an intelligent and virtuous man may fall into a state of despair because he cannot marry the woman he loves. This state of mind can keep him from succeeding in other areas of his life.

A surprisingly large number of people fail to marry their true partner in life, and end up desperate and bitter as a result. With a perfect marriage, one may for the first time lead a perfect life. Because this union is the true foundation of human existence, if the marriage bond weakens, the entire world suffers as well.

A wife who abuses the household help either is being treated badly by her husband, or else feels inferior. It is certainly not because there is any rule saying that you must always mistreat your domestic help. Behind the young fellow who frequents the pleasure quarters there undoubtedly lurks an unrequited love, or some such disappointment. It's hardly the case that a young man would be attracted to a dissolute life from the very beginning.
However, in most instances society fails to see beyond the surface to such hidden reasons, and brands such youths as "shameful." If we judge the various good and evil actions of men simply by their outer appearance, we can never hope to understand them clearly. All of these actions spring from irresistible inner needs.
Therefore, we must constantly reconsider our opinions of others, and

with broadmindedness and compassion try to see things from their viewpoint. At the same time, we must strictly reflect upon our own conduct, and be mindful not to cause others any emotional distress.

Your frame of mind is most important. Outward propriety is far less essential—we must always strive first to make our inner nature honest, pure, and generous. Instead of worrying about tiresome formalities we must first develop an awareness of and respect for each other's feelings. True courtesy is essentially behavior to put one another at ease, and to do this it must be something that manifests itself naturally from within.

In this way, the behavior of an artless child is the most agreeably courteous of all. Now matter how fine a person's manners may be, if their heart is insincere and they are neither benevolent nor generous, such manners will be but a sham. In essence, our internal feelings are far more vital than our outer deportment.

Nevertheless, it's human nature to feel lonely, sad, or angry at times. This is something we absolutely cannot conceal from others. In such times it is best to simply try to restrain these emotions as much as possible around others.

Though a person's feelings may not be outwardly obvious on first meeting them, these feeling are immediately transmitted on an internal level. Thus, as soon as we are aware of being in a black mood, we should contrive to expel this feeling and replace it with calmness, so as not to transmit our anger to others.

Humility is the most appropriate paint with which to brush over such hateful feelings. Though it is vain to expect to suddenly feel happy when angry or cheerful when lonely, it is easiest and best if one can simply forget oneself and be serene and composed.

Essentially, if you divorce yourself from self-interest, and resolve to do good for the sake of good, then you will never know fear. All things done out of greed are apt to end in ruin.

No matter how great he may be, the unhealthy person will never be able to exercise true power.
If you wish to manifest your own self, you must first cultivate soundness of body.

Just as the evergreen constancy of the pine only becomes evident in the bleak depths of winter, so too do we only fully comprehend our debt of gratitude to our parents after they have passed away.
While we are accustomed to benevolent treatment, we fail to view it as valuable or worthy of thanks, but the moment such favor ends, we suddenly realize what it was, and become overwhelmed with feelings of nostalgic gratitude.
How would it be if there were a single day when sun, moon, water, and air were removed from the earth? And yet we feel not the slightest gratitude for these things, wholly taking them for granted.
Generally speaking, even the most arrogant "King of the Mountain", on meeting with natural disaster or serious threat to his life, will for the first time find a consciousness of God welling up from the depths of his heart.
No matter how much we bandy about arguments of logic, science and law as if they mean something, in essence we are all no more than single tiny existences granted life on this planet. Without pondering the fundamental questions of why we are born and what happens after we die, and without reflecting on what we have done with our lives, we become the slaves of petty fame and fortune, and foolishly squander our time away. Such living can only be called the true height of idiocy.

Unless, after trying our hand at a variety of things we come to recognize their true nature deep in our hearts, this world will know little improvement.
Trying various things ourselves, and letting others do the same, we must work while consulting with each other.
It is best to satisfy yourself by experiencing broadly, without limits. Unless you do so, you will never become a truly versatile person.
In this world, there is no great difference between good and bad, wise and foolish. Too much or too little of a thing is bad—an appropriate amount is good.
He who knows moderation in things is a great man. In order to find such balance, you must first experience many different situations.

The reason we feel tense when visiting an unfamiliar place, is because we insist on behaving in an extremely unnatural manner. In all things, to distinguish between ones usual behavior and one's "company

manners" is a grave mistake.
If we always maintain a state of open-minded adaptability to circumstances, we will never find our actions to be unnatural. To go against what is natural is a violation of the laws of heaven and earth.

For some reason, I have recently come to often feel vacant and dull, like beer gone flat. Then, by some chance, I will suddenly perk up—but the source of the ebb and flow of this tide is not at all clear.
People, rather than racking their brains over this and that, should simply eat when hungry, drink when thirsty, and day by day do those things which they naturally feel like doing—this is a far more honest way of living.
Living from the head leads to stagnation. You must live from the gut. Hesitation and procrastination will not do.
When a primary school student, it is enough to simply know what is normal for a primary school student. Even should such a child have the knowledge of a college student, their actions will still be those of a small child, and it will be pointless.
With writing as well, it is foolish to expect to write skillfully from the very start. It is best to simply let your thoughts flow smoothly from the tip of the brush as they appear. If you ponder too deeply—vainly worrying over elaborate details of wording and description—time will merely pass in endless scribbling and erasing, and you will make no progress at all.
Something created against your instincts will always seem unsatisfactory, and have an air of repugnance to it. When you are unskilled, you should be content to be unskilled, and without trying to hide it just go about your work easily and frankly. It is natural to simply show your own spirit as it is in all that you do. The moment you attempt to express that which is alien to you, no matter how hard you try, it will be in vain.
Many authors, while bearing gloomy countenances, have turned out prose of great humor and wit. It is not that they are showing their spirit in a false light, but that such writers have yet to discover their true self, and so the torment they suffer from their base natures appears in the lines of their faces. But because their true spirit is one of optimism, one way or another glimmers of this light shine through.

# PART V. — BY NATURE'S PROVIDENCE

## A World of Interest

The world is full of many different creatures all doing a myriad of different things. Slow down, and take it all in.

Certainly, this is a world we must be thankful for.
This is because all things are advancing.

You must not rely only on teachers and books. All of creation is textbook and teacher for us.

History is hardly reliable. Because the successive governments of the world have taken pains to avoid passing down records that show them in a bad light, it is impossible to find impartial historical truth. Those people who have been indiscriminately labeled hero or villain by later generations, were not in fact necessarily so.
Essentially, the idea that "righteousness lies with the victor" is ridiculous.

Discovery and invention, rather than being the fruit of assiduously striving for a particlar goal, are far more often triggered by an inadvertent source—which might also be called Divine inspiration. Reflecting on this fact, we soon see that without such heavenly inspiration, we cannot hope to accomplish truly great work.
Nevertheless, modern man continues to foolishly waste time and effort trying to place all things within the narrow purview of science.
We are to quickly dismiss the legends of ancient times as unimportant, but the minds of the people of those times were far purer than the minds of modern men, and to this extent it is reasonable to think that these people were more widely touched by Divine inspiration than we are today.
Therefore, the very fact that the fundamental essence of these legends is basically the same for all the world's races, shows that they all similarly drew their inspiration from the Divine.
As a result, there is a great deal to be gained from a close study of ancient folklore, after carefully separating out the contrived and superstitious elements that were added later.
I cannot condone the actions of those who treat such legends as though they were the fairy tales of children, and summarily dismiss them as being unscientific. Though it may seem unscientific today, we cannot deny that it might come to be seen as scientific sometime in the future.

## Working in Accord with Nature's Timing

Watch the plants and trees grow, blossom, and bear fruit. They do not oppose nature in the slightest.
Because we go to impossible lengths in our haste to have things our way, we suffer. If we simply went about our work in accord with nature's cycles, everything would proceed joyously and smoothly. To do things unwillingly and unhappily is clearly unnatural.
Pointless and excessive self-denial, perseverance, and diligence, in the eyes of God, is nothing short of absurdity. It is the practice of modern man to seek out unnecessary suffering, and call it down upon his own head.

There's a saying , "Eat till you're eighty percent full; you'll never need a doctor", and this applies to the metaphysical realm as well.
No matter what you are doing, unless you maintain an ample reserve of ease and vigor, your life will be unpleasant. Those people who cling to a position beyond the extent of their own abilities, are bound to suffer greatly. Even those people in a position which requires a full hundred percent of their ability, will somehow feel harried and overwhelmed. Therefore, it is best to find a place where eighty percent of your true ability is enough, and you can feel wholly at ease.
We must reflect often upon our own strengths, and try to live in such a way that we always have a reserve to draw upon deep in our hearts.

Change in our circumstances also brings extreme change in the way we feel. While we are off at boarding school receiving a monthly allowance from our parents, we live in an extremely loose and spendthrift manner. But when we come to have our own family, and must make do with whatever is available, suddenly finances dominate our thoughts and our former free-spending ways are impossible.
Yet, in my own experience, the former of these two states is vastly more pleasant.

Rather than trying to learn things all at once, you should approach life as a painter, gradually brushing on layer upon layer of color in order to obtain a deep rich hue. [*] In the beginning, let your first impressions be enough, then steadily deepen and strengthen them.

The world is full of close-minded and miserly folk. There are none more unpleasant than those who constantly bicker over the petty self-interests right before their noses, oblivious to the greater scheme of things. But if we reflect well upon our own actions, we find that we all unwittingly repeat such folly again and again.
He who does not reflect, knows no advancement.

The desire to be better than one's fellow men is a despicable thing; from it arises all envy, jealousy and murderous feeling. Yet among the people of today's world, this desire is stronger than all else. What is

needed is for each of us to become able to act just from the motive of pure enjoyment.
Nothing is more hateful than the ambition to advance one's own status, by forcefully pushing others aside. A surprising amount of the ugliness, wretchedness, and idiocy in this world is merely the reflection of such desire.
We must all naturally come to find a place that is truly right for us.

Each person possesses their own individual philosophy. Regardless of whether this philosophy is actually based on truth or not, the deeper a person's experience and knowledge, the more profound their words and actions will be.

When we move from one world to a different one, we naturally experience hardship. The essential process and pain brought by a change in circumstances are unavoidable.
This is why our deaths are accompanied by such anguish and suffering. The case of someone who has been living in Japan suddenly moving abroad is the same. The longtime writer of classical prose, making a shift to using informal language, experiences this too. Our first conversation with a stranger is bound to be a bit strained and awkward.
If you make a point of stopping to rest before you become completely exhausted, you will always feel refreshed. But if you only stop to rest after you are wholly beat, it will take a very long time and be quite difficult to fully recover.
Once you have become inured to a particular situation, it becomes impossible to judge it objectively.

It takes great pains and effort to create something of value. If you wish to build a real house, conjuring tricks are useless. First you must build a foundation and gather timber, then spend months of great labor.
In this light, even though the world is full of strife, suffering, and incomprehensible things, from a broad view it is gradually making progress for the better.
Those who believe that this world brings only suffering to the weak, and is filled with nothing but strife, hatred, and the stench of destruction, are failing to see the big picture.
With winter's coming, we think only of winter, and how unbearably cold it is. While understandable, this is a narrow and mistaken way to think, forgetting the broad view of the entire year. After Winter, in due course Spring will come along. Spring gives way to Summer, and Summer to Fall. The person who, bound by limited and narrow thought, frets at nature's reasons for tormenting us by making it so hot in the summer, is only causing himself unnecessary suffering.

Most important for us is that we train our eyes and our minds on the broadly infinite, and live in ease and composure.

Some people are always planning this or that in their heads without ever setting their hands to anything.
Someone once said, "Life is indecision", and he was, in fact, right.
While we pass our days sluggishly and hesitantly, fifty years go by like a dream.
This world is a cultivating ground for man, and if we live in fear of even the smallest failure, we can accomplish nothing. It is good to forge ahead boldly and forcefully along one's own path. Good to stumble over rocks, inch across bridges of logs. Good, too, to meet up with tigers and wolves. Unless we float on the waves and cross mountains, we can't know the taste of travel. On each occasion it is good to reflect on our experiences. And after much thought and reflection, it is good in the end to understand.
There is no other way to become a true person.
Booklearning is fine; theorizing as well. But we must not become enslaved by them. Just as much as eating is life, so too is defecating. Without question, every single thing we meet as we pass through this world is all a part of life.

## Surrounded by Innumerable Teachers

The writer Chikamatsu Monzaemon emphasized the importance of "deeper meaning" in prose. Yet this is not something to be said only of writing; it is a necessity in human life as well.
[Things of refinement and restrained depth seem rare in Western civilization.]

Man's actions spring from the spirit, not from theory. More than the talented and resourceful show-off, the man of subtle depth is the one we seek out.
In all areas, I find the absence of refinement in today's world utterly abhorrent.

Truly, modern man has reversed the value of the material and the spiritual. It has become a world where for desire of money men will endure any amount of spiritual indignity.
In this respect, the samurai of old clearly placed spirit over matter. At one time, a samurai would write upon an IOU, " If I fail to repay this in the prescribed time, you may have me laughed at in public". The reason for this was that to a samurai, public humiliation was a suffering so great that not even a thousand gold pieces could compensate for it.
Those who endure great spiritual hardship for the sake of saving a little money are legion. This is a truly mistaken approach to life.
The number of those who fail to understand that the spirit is primary and the material secondary has steadily grown. Of course, material possessions have great influence on mankind's spirit—but whether we are able to use things freely depends entirely on the state of our hearts. In this way, we first come to sense the true joy of our existence here.
Yet, in spite of this, at every level, we are creating with our own hands a fettered and unnatural society.

In all things, we must never act against nature. If we raise flowers in a greenhouse, and they bloom out of season, these flowers are unnatural. A "success" that is forced is no true success. Unless everything flows naturally, following the changes of heaven and earth, there can be no true growth and development.
It is wrong to heedlessly endure great hardship merely in order to rise above one's fellows. Diligence, pushed to the point of suffering, is no longer a good thing. When a person works strenuously out of a natural desire to do so, onlookers may think him quite industrious, but to the person working it is sheer pleasure.
On the other hand, those endure great torment in doing work which they hate are living in folly.

That this second type is far more common in our world today is truly a shame.

The absolute truth is soundless and shapeless, by no means a thing that can be shown or produced.
People who spend too much time looking for the absolute tend to be disappointed and pessimistic. It is actually better for us that there be no such thing [as the absolute].
Of all the myriad things in this world, not one, even for a brief second, ever returns to its previous state. All are ceaselessly moving and changing.
We cannot insist on something being a certain way now, simply because it was so in the past. In our day-to-day lives, adapting to diverse and everchanging circumstances is a matter of course.
Just as the needs of food, shelter, and clothing vary in accord with the seasons, so too do the thoughts and actions of the individual inevitably change with each new occasion.
The person who firmly grasps opportunity, and adapts himself to it, succeeds. To let such chance slip, and even act against it, brings certain failure.
Just as still water grows stagnant, the man who knows nothing of the creation of opportunity, and clings to just one thing, will be long-suffering.

The more one leafs through the history books of the world, the smaller one's own existence appears.
Though there are only a few thousand years of recorded history, in this short time mankind has suffered greatly. The Buddha appeared, Christ appeared, Confucius appeared; the Buddha died, Christ died, Confucius died—yet the world is as full of suffering and damnation as ever. [ O God, please do something!]

Unless we run up against things, suffer for them, contemplate them, and finally come to understand them, they will not truly be ours. All the myriad phenomena of the universe are textbooks and teachers without limit.
We need merely make the effort to read them, and have the courage to ask questions of them.
Truth exists in the most insignificant of things. If one merely takes the trouble to be aware of and to reflect upon these things, anyone can be a great scholar of truth.

## Going With the Flow

In today's world, people have forgotten what is of primary meaning, and devote themselves only to things of secondary and tertiary importance.

Two people slapping down black and white stones from dawn to dusk in a game of *Go* , heedless to all else—for the cold, outside observer of these two, there is no formula with which to sum up their passion. The feeling of a man floating in the middle of a vast blue expanse of sea, as he lets down a line to fish, is not something which can be calculated.
Even the inner feeling of the millionaire, who knowing that he cannot take it with him, nevertheless devotes all his energy to pinching pennies right up to his final breath, is not something that can be fully comprehended by others.
It is a great joy to forget the coming of dawn while playing *Go*. And is it a great joy to forget one's own existence while fishing. Even with making money, it is fine if one becomes thoroughly caught up in it. Becoming a rich man, scholar, or cabinet minister in no way guarantees happiness. One can find limitless interest in digging dirt. There can be indescribable pleasure in sorting rags and wastepaper. Rather than becoming a cabinet minister, always suffering from one sort of stress or another, the free-minded life of the rag-picker is a far more pleasant choice.

Recently, I have completely lost interest in playing chess. This shift of feeling is an interesting matter. Just this summer I was so obsessed with chess that on seeing hitching signs with the character "horse" written on them, I would think them to be chesspiece knights. But now the winds of autumn have blown this interest away, and surely my chesspieces are now grudging their master's fickleness from the drawer where they sit.
To be obsessed with chess, and to grow tired of it, are both natural. There is no need to be caught up by the game, nor is there anything wrong with playing.
Looking back on my former state, when I was so obsessed by a bunch of trivial pieces of wood, I now view myself as having been a fool. Yet, recalling my feelings this summer—when I was convinced that those to whom such a fascinating hobby was unknown must surely be miserable, and when I saw chess as such a pleasure unequaled in all the world that I doubted if I could tear myself away to attend my parents at their deathbed, or even to attend my own deathbed—to this person the current me would seem to be a fool.
I have increasingly come to believe that to make a fuss over what is good and what is bad, who is wise and who is a fool, is essentially

useless.

Each thing has its own unique point of interest. Just as a musician can find limitless joy in a beat-up old instrument, and a scientist indescribable interest in the contents of a test tube, each person finds pleasure in a world that cannot be spoiled by others.
Therefore, we cannot judge others by our own individual views. At the same time, criticism of one's own personal interests by outsiders is absurd.

It's said that "a rumor only lasts for 75 days", a fact which keenly brings to mind the disregard people have for past events. Even with our own previous opinions and statements, though at the time we proclaim them to be "absolutely, unquestionably so", after a few days have passed, we often act in a way wholly contradictory to them, and unless others chide us for this hypocrisy, we completely forget our earlier stance.
On further reflection, it seems to be this ability to exercise selective memory which allows us to live from day to day in carefree bliss.
There's also a saying, "speak of next year and devils laugh". The extent to which events of the future lie utterly shrouded in darkness provides much food for thought. How much of the happenings of each day actually follow our own anticipations? The majority of the time, our lives consist of a everchanging series of unforeseen events.

Lately I have been thinking much upon the destiny/karma of the human soul/spirit.
*(**rework**) Though a man skilfully reasons and puts on airs, yet still fails to command the slightest bit of respect from others, it is surely because of the impurity of his spirit. On meeting a person of crytal clear pureness, we are filled with an idescribably pleasant feeling of intimate joy.
All phenomena of this world, without the slightest discrimination, are ruled over by the laws of cause and effect. Each person reveals his true nature in his mundane daily actions. What you see before you at this moment, is reality.

It is unwise to forcefully act against your surroundings. You must approach things with pliant resilience.
If you cultivate honesty and devotion, this will not go unnoticed by God.
We must bow down before all things, and give thanks for them. Without fail, this will in the end bring happiness.

## Following the Rhythms of Heaven and Earth

With eyes alone we cannot see
It is because there is light that we can see
With legs alone we cannot walk
It is because there is earth that we can walk

If even one finger is hurt, this pain is felt throughout the entire body. If there is one black sheep in a family, he causes the entire family to be filled with anxiety. An organization, a country, a world...they are all the same in this respect. The only difference is whether the influence is very direct, or more subtle.
Our every thought, word, and action mutually influence each other. On reflection, it is keenly clear to me that we do not exist merely for ourselves, but rather for all people and all things.
Therefore, right livelihood, whatever world we live in, lies in the fulfilling of our obligations to the whole.

There is nothing more unpleasant than to receive something given reluctantly and in ill grace. If given willingly and gracefully, we will lightly accept a gift of 10,000 dollars which we did not earn. But if this money is given grudgingly, even though it has been earned, we will not want to accept a single penny of it.
Though things appear pleasant enough on the surface, inner relations are so tangled that the situation in today's world has become intolerable.

There is a rhythm running through all things. Unconsciously, we are trying to attune ourselves to this rhythm. If we simply maintain a wholly pure state of mind, then, without any special effort or hardship, we will naturally find accord with the workings of heaven and earth. This is the highest path. By using our narrow human intellect to meticulously calculate and devise, we can never hope to gain an understanding of the laws of the universe.
For all things, it is during times of greatest tranquility and greatest joy that our actions flow with the rhythms of heaven and earth.

I have been considering the traces that feelings leave behind. Physically speaking, we may call this inertia or aftereffect, but in any case, it is clear that the vestiges of emotion continue to exert their influence on people for a surprisingly long time. Often, the traces of an unpleasant feeling are liable to bring on another unpleasant incident, and a single bad event will tend to lead to several others. Since the root of success or failure in a matter lies in such small things as these, we need always to keep our feelings calm and joyful.
There is a popular phrase, to "get into the swing of things", which is truly important when it comes to working—to fail to do so prevents us from true accomplishment. The vestiges of happy feeling lead to more

and more fortuitous events of the same kind, and without fail good fortune will then multiply by leaps and bounds.
The saying "like attracts like" holds true for nearly everything. Because similar moods seek each other out, even outside the physical world there is a tendency for one fortuitous event to bring on others. Therefore, we must strive to observe this law of attraction, and ever aim to work vibrantly in the world.
Bees sting the crying face. Fortune comes to a happy home.

In counseling others on their weak points, a huge difference in result can be seen depending on whether this is done in kindness, or if it is done with malice and derision. Indeed, this can be seen in the disorder, and the abundance of pointless activity, that characterizes today's society.
However, if we approach this social disorder with criticism and anger, we will only succeed in causing others to dislike us. Even in the actions of our higher-ups, if we look at these with righteousness and justice, there will undoubtedly be areas that we must admire. Thus, we must always try to regard others with generosity, and not show meanness by rejoicing in their minor faults. It is a sign of true humanity to sympathize with the situations of others, and avoid exposing their faults.
There is no such thing as a fundamentally evil person in this world. All people are good by nature. It's simply from small misunderstanding and mistakes that the world has grown to be this chaotic. In all the affairs of this world, unless we try to resolve them with the mutual love seen in the caring of parent for child, and the support of wife for husband, they will only end in strife and failure. Because the half-baked people of today wholly ignore the feelings of others, basing their actions solely on the prerogatives of logic, this world has become ill at ease and barren. No one can afford to live in denial of human emotion. No matter how righteous and good a person may be in theory, under the force of the circumstances of emotion, it is not uncommon to instead enter into evil and injustice. The person who said "Men are moved by the force of human spirit, caring nothing for fame or reputation", was speaking of this.
No matter what new theories or principles are discovered in the future, as long as there is strife and discord between the souls of men, this world will not know happiness.
Incidentally, scholarship and knowledge are by no means the sole purpose of life. It is indeed possible for an illiterate person to lead an exemplary life, while a learned man of stunted spirit will be avoided by all.

In the end, good and evil are like east and west: there is no such thing

as absolute good or absolute evil. There is no evil that does not bring some good, nor is there any good unaccompanied by some measure of evil. Essentially, it is a matter of how we see things.
It is unavoidable that when we travel to the east, we lose the west, and when we go to the west, to that extent we lose the east. If we strive to relinquish neither east nor west, we will soon find ourselves unable to budge at all. It is only fitting that we eat when hungry, and relieve ourselves when the need comes—unpleasant indeed are such uptight folk as condone the act of eating, but find its necessary complement shameful and outrageous.
The universe knows neither fixed space nor time. Our material world exists as no more than a small-scale model of this vastness—and there is nothing more absurd than to cling to the small-minded notion that this tiny model is all there is. Attachment to such foolishness is both backwards and degenerate. We must cast away the shells of narrow ideology we have built and burdened ourselves with, and dress in robes of limitless brilliance and beauty. If we simply manage to rectify the state of our hearts, this world will naturally come to a state of perfect freeedom.

The fundamental source of happiness in life is not money, science, nor medicine. It is the human heart.
The foolish people of this world, for the sake of mere trifling objects, seem to think nothing of injuring and oppressing the precious spirits of others. The human spirit is eternal; materials things fleeting. A world that values the material over the spiritual is not likely to ever know happiness or peace. Just as is said in the Chinese proverb, "Two hearts in unison have the strength to cut through metal", there is nothing more powerful or joyful in this world than spiritual harmony. There is nothing more beautiful and enviable/ideal than the relationship between two people sharing both joy and suffering together. Even in holy scripture we find it written that "To gain true knowledge of another soul, is clearly to gain entrance to another world."
At all times, one who values/honors the human spirit is to be respected.

## This World's an Interesting Place

Think once; reflect three times.

Evil does not exist, but evil actions do.

Call action for many good
Call action for one evil

Other people are not evil
Evil lies within oneself

[Good will makes pure the realm of devils]

This world is the ultimate reality
It exists just as it is this moment.

Be rid of trivial attachments
Fix your eyes on the whole

Not knowing the future, we live in darkness
Yet should we know it, we would surely lose our way

Fewer words hold deeper meaning
For words alone, a recording will do

We must see the essential nature of things;
And avoid being misled by false states.

Human nature does not change in a day

We must return to the highest principles

Even a single roadside weed must at all costs be left unharmed and allowed to grow.
All things should be allowed to fully realize their mission in life.
[It is best if we can respect each other's individuality, while living together in harmony.]

The universe consists of rhythm. All things in this world, should they fall out of sync with this rhythm, will experience suffering, anguish, and ruin.
Each individual has his own unique inborn rhythm as well. Those who manage to maintain this rhythm throughout their lives, will know true success.

The pinnacle of science will be reached when the rhythms of all things are clearly understood.
Each and every thing in this world has it own innate cyclical nature. When the cycles of all things are fully ascertained, the mission of science will be complete.

"Getting into the swing of things", is simply the moment when the rhythm of one's spirit becomes attuned to the rhythm of the work one is doing.

The times when our spirit falls into step with the rhythms of our surroundings, are when we know true happiness.

The human spirit is like wind or water, always tending to adapt to the

conditions of its environment. At the same time, each of us is endowed with our own individual spiritual nature, and we are constantly working to adapt our environment to ourselves.
It does not matter whether we adapt ourselves to our surroundings or adapt our surroundings to ourselves, if we can achieve a rhythm of accord between the two then we will know utter happiness for the first time.

Naturally, it requires great effort to synchronize the rhythms of self and environment.
On a larger scale, the universe itself is still undergoing this process. In other words, the ideal is the rhythm of God, and the reality is the present rhythm of the universe. All of the modern world's suffering springs from the current disharmony between these two rhythms. However, this must be resolved before long, and reality and the ideal must come into accord with each other.

Souls who display the same rhythm of temperament, belong to the same type, and souls who belong to the same type, share the same joys and sorrows.
When two people, upon only meeting once, feel a natural affinity as though they had been friends for many years, it is because their spiritual types are similar.

Though I have said that human spirit has an inclination to adapt itself to its environment, by no means does it abandon the rhythm it is originally endowed with.
Whether you plant mugwort seeds in a field of flax, or on the side of the road, nothing will ever grow from them but mugwort.

To spend time with a person whose spiritual rhythm is at odds with one's own is nothing but misery, while to be with another of similar nature is pure joy.
Once, the members of a family were expected to be intimate friends. In today’s confused world, this is no longer the case. Now, in many families the members can barely stand to look at each other each morning.
If a man suddenly takes an interest in something that previously did not interest him, in many cases it is not because of a basic change in his own spirit but because some other spirit has come to influence him.

Once let in, fear knows no bounds
Not knowing allows for nonchalance.

At every instant limitless paths open before us
From that one to this one

We hop, leap, and stumble.
The path I must follow is straight ahead
Sunset comes while we wander at a loss.

If you come to a dead end, turn back
If you come to a river, look for a bridge
If there's no bridge, look for a boat
If there's no boat, look for a ford
If there's no ford, swim for it.
If the river is wide and swift
Ask around if there's a ferry.
At a time of unusually bad flooding
Best to find lodging and wait it out.

On reflection, this world's not such a difficult place
Living, dying—nothing could be simpler.

The power to bind and the power to release;
There are two powers in this world.
Binding, releasing
Releasing, binding
The new becomes old,
The old becomes new.
Limitlessly gathering and limitlessly scattering
Old and new run together endlessly.
This world's an interesting place.

## Looking Above, Looking Below...

We should bear good will towards even a single grain of sand.

Trying to save the world out of a sense of forced obligation is falsehood; it's enough if we simply feel an [overwhelming] desire to improve the state of things.
It's common for people, acting from limited human intellect, to instead proffer unwanted/unneeded help, and to disturb the balance of things.
Suffering brings understanding—those who from the beginning suffer not even the slightest hardship, will likely fail to advance spiritually.

Foolish to live in constant fear of the ridicule of others, and allow such worry to stifle your plans for action.
Though it is best to avoid troubling others, a great many people repress themselves for absurd reasons, when they should be looking to others for help.
By worrying and hesitating over meaningless things, you lose sight of why you were ever born into this world.
Because each of us is born with a unique destiny, if we exert all our strength towards self-perfection (in the good sense of the word), God will smile on us, and we will not fail in our life's appointed mission.
In any enterprise, unless men first manage to work together, they cannot possibly achieve anything of worth.

Every person at one time or another believes he is the most miserable soul on earth. However, we should be silent and take a look around the rest of the world. We will soon realize just how many people there are whose state is worse than ours. Looking above, people without limit; looking below, people without limit—this we should clearly see.

My eternal aspiration is to travel to every corner of the earth, and observe every one of its sights and circumstances.
I find delight in change.

What we do not understand is best left alone. To force your way to a limited explanation, and then act as if you understand, will only lead you unwittingly to misconception, and later surely invite disaster.

All things are in constant flux.
The true way is to adapt to change.

Things appear chaotic, yet they are unified.
Amidst endless change and diversity, there are steadfast principles.

Environment makes the man. God makes the environment.

As long as you have an interest, you can accomplish.

Human life is the movement of the spirit.

## From Between Two Opposing Things/Forces

The root of all human distress, essentially, is when we are not able to do things as we wish to.
All over this world we find people who live in circumstances where they could accomplish anything with ease if only they tried. Yet, out of timidity and cowardice they fail to see a single thing through properly, and as a result exist in misery.
Meanwhile, those who heedlessly barge in on the activities of others while striving at any cost to realize their own ambitions, are still living in a primitive age.
As much as we can, we must allow others to pursue their dreams. With our children, siblings, friends, and students, it is best if we simply let them follow their chosen paths.

We are moved by chance and whimsy. What first occurs to us in a flash of thought is true inspiration from God. To hesitantly ponder with human intellect only serves to obstruct this Divine inflow.

Artlessness is heavenly.
The man of pure spirit, though he be born into this material world, will not taste any great suffering. He will naturally complete his stay on the earth in peace and without mishap, and so ascend to heaven. Thus, the people who now labor to improve the state of this world, do so because they bear sins themselves. If they were without sin, they would not readily resign themselves to hardship. This is a matter of Divine law, not to be escaped. In today's world it is truly impossible to try to live without committing the slightest sin. The more one strives to avoid sinning, the less one is able to engage in the activities of the world. To live in the modern world involves a necessary mixture of good and evil. Most people, however, while panting and struggling under a heavy burden of sin, try to avoid this reality. Spending their days in blind confusion of what is good and what is evil, their sins only grow heavier and heavier until leading to their eventual ruin.
In working for a public cause wholly divorced from self-interest, some minor ill-doing is unavoidable. But should a person be temporarily damned for such deeds, God will not abandon him, and it is certain that in the end he will come to reside in heaven. In today's degenerate world, to fret over every little vice and sin will only leave one with hands and feet tied.

Fire and water are of completely opposing temperament. Because all things in nature are formed from the binding of these two elements, there is nothing in the universe that can be said to be absolute. Water alone won't do; fire alone won't do—all things depend upon the wedding of the two.
Top and bottom, front and back, left and right, heaven and earth, yin and yang, man and woman, spirit and body, good and evil, pain and joy—from all of these opposing elements, our world is formed. We should not do only work; nor, of course, should we do nothing but play. Headstrong self-assurance alone won't do, nor is it enough to blindly follow others. To leave all things to God, while passing one's days blithely in sloth and play, will turn one into a zombie of sorts. On the other hand, by vainly struggling to carry out everything with one's own power, while ignoring God, one will not be able to accomplish a single thing. "Fortune comes to those who wait" is perfectly true, but so is the saying "Industry knows no poverty." "Don't try to force others to join one's own church" is sensible advice, but it can also be said that "Selfish faith is worthless; unless one helps others to make positive change, there is no virtue in following the path of God."
Even the lid of a pot has a front and back. It cannot be said that the front is good while the back is bad. Front and back are both necessary; it is impossible to make a pot lid with only one or the other. If, however, the front is used as back, or the back as front, this is no good. It is wrong to speak the truth when a lie is called for. To quarrel when peace-making is necessary is wrong as well. To do something when one must not, or fail to when one must, is the unfortunate way of modern folk.
There is none more intractable than the stubborn man who, locked into his narrow view, goes about telling everyone, "You must be this. You must do that."
If you think about it, to say "I don't like this person" or "That person is evil" is absolutely inexcusable. Even with good friends, though there are times of close empathy, there are also times when they vex and annoy each other. You cannot expect any person to be wholly good. The good people of this world are simply those who are good when it is necessary to be good, and bad when it is necessary to be bad.

When you no longer sense any contradiction among things, you will have become enlightened.

Discipline is not something to be taken lightly. Watching the sleight of hand of a magician, or the acrobatic feats, plate and top-spinning, and miming of a street performer, it is clear that these people were born with a natural talent for what they do. But even so, it is also clear that

a great deal of diligent effort was spent in perfecting their arts to this level. Human beings accumulate a variety of experience as they are reborn from one life to the next; because today's effort will become tomorrow's asset, it is wise to work conscientiously at many things.

Because with just a little care and effort most things can be done more easily than expected, it is vital not to waste time habitually.

To compete in things is not good. The public decision of winner and loser leads us unwittingly to self-centered egotism. Our position and mission in life is decided from the moment we are born—it is best if each of us simply comes to find that position naturally. To deliberately contend over who is wise and who is foolish, and compete for distinction, is clearly wrong.
From competition arise the innumerable jealousies and grudges rampant since ancient times. It even brings about such absurdity as a trivial dispute between two people leading to the bitter feuding of many generations of their offspring.
In every contest, while one person is the joyful victor, there is always a corresponding unhappy loser. This is a truly unpleasant state of affairs; people can only hope to live in harmony when they fully share all of their joys and sorrows with each other.
By shoving others aside in an attempt to get ahead, we only manage to plunge this world deeper into a state of chaos and misery.
In this sense, all competitions, including schools exams and the like, bring only evil results.

In all matters, we should strive to do our best while following the natural course of events. If we try to plan and regulate things with narrow human intellect, all our efforts will be to little effect.
We should let our hearts and our higher instincts lead us.
It is merely necessary that we resolve never to do what we think to be wrong.

## Living Appropriately

If done in anger, any action will be the creation of a hell; if done in joy, everything one does will be the creation of paradise.
If only we are conscious of serving God in all we do, our actions will be happy, carefree, and full of gratitude. Moreover, to act with the feeling that it is for God will not go unnoticed. Without realizing it, we will come to receive the blessing of God in equal measure.
In all matters, if we approach a person with a feeling of gladness, without fail that person will feel happy and grateful too.
On the other hand, if you approach a stranger with even the slightest feeling of dislike, he will be compelled to feel the same dislike for you.
A bushel measure holds only a bushel, a pint measure no more than a pint. A vessel for happiness attracts all the joy it will hold; a vessel for sadness will be filled to capacity with sorrow.
Luck and misfortune, sorrow and joy, good and evil—what returns to us is no more than what we send out.

An infant in a poor and struggling household knows no worry. This is because such things as poverty do not enter its thoughts. Even among merchants who are rolling in wealth, there are some who fail to sleep at night from worry over small changes in market price. This is because they have come to identify themselves completely with their business. For the person planning to hold a picnic, overcast weather the evening before will keep him up and worrying till dawn, while the person who is planning to stay home will care not a whit whether it looks like rain or not. Thinking brings on worry; what we are unaware of does not trouble us.
Even when it rains for days on end, because we all know that it will eventually stop, we do not worry. However, when a little bit of hardship befalls us, we worry and feel sorry for ourselves, thinking only of the worst.
It is a curious fact that even a person who understands something of the workings of this world—rain and sunshine, sunrise and sunset, blooming and withering—will, in a pinch where his own body is concerned, completely lose all his savoir faire. As a rule, the outsider sees more; even if we are able to appraise others fairly, when it comes to judging ourselves we become lost. This is the weak point of human nature. Because our physical bodies are instinctively no more than lumps of self-interest and self-preservation, we need to reflect deeply, and learn to feel the pain of others as our own.
To think that everyone else is happy, and only you are not, shows scant understanding of the reality of this world. It comes from only comparing yourself to people of a higher station. It is human nature to ignore our own faults while envying and grudging others, but we

would be wise to get in the habit of first reflecting upon our own conduct.
In travelling widely over this earth, from beginning to end we will encounter myriad varieties of suffering, anguish, trouble, and calamity. Conscious of this, instead of becoming disheartened and upset by our own trifling troubles and failures, we should be able to live always with gratitude and joy. Tolerant of the actions of our fellow men, we will be able to view ourselves and others with calm deliberation.

The infant is an infant, and lives from day to day without worry or doubt; the child is a child, and passes his days without pondering the mysteries of this world; the adult is an adult, and grows inured to his world, living without surprise or wonder. Each becomes unwittingly set in believing that "the world is thus."
A single thing can be perceived in a myriad of ways, depending on who is doing the looking.
As we progress, our earlier accomplishments come to seem without value, though at the time we may have felt we were doing work of the highest significance.
In the eyes of God, our actions must appear similar to those of a laughing and crying infant playing with its toys.

To steal ten yen from a man who has but a hundred, is a far greater sin than to steal a hundred yen from a man who has ten thousand. For a person who fills a broken bucket with soil and lovingly raises a morning glory in it, that plant is more valuable than the finest cypress on Mt. Ari. To the man whose house is on fire, a single ladleful of water is more precious than the Emperors highest decoration. If you are caught in a flood, a single floating log is infinitely more desirable than a chest filled with gold.
The value of all things is relative, and changes with the person, place, and time. This being so, to judge things to be good or bad based solely on their outward quality and quantity, is wholly inexcusable.
All of our preconceptions are the fruit of one-sided and limited human reasoning, unnaturally drummed into us since childhood. We must cast these aside, and quietly looking over the vastness of Nature, reflect upon man's inborn nature. As long as we cling to various ideologies, and insist that things must be a certain way, we can only be called immature.
Spring puts forth spring colors; summer displays the air of summer—this the way of nature and Divine will. There are clouds and water, birds and trees—here can be found all the elements of a landscape painting. There is good and bad, west and east, floating and sinking, salt and sugar—this is the way the world works.

Spring is fine. But to become too caught up in spring, will only lead to restless angst. Sugar is sweet. But to gorge oneself upon it is a sure recipe to shorten one's life.
If you become caught up in the belief that your own thoughts and possessions are unique, and indulge in it, it will only lead to the harming of nature, and the profaning of God.
All things are in constant flux. Everything is regenerating without cease. At dawn one's spirit is newly born, by nightfall it is a mature corpse. Higher, deeper, broader, further, better, more beautiful—it is my desire to live each and every day renewed and afresh.
By following the exact same mottoes, ideals, and principles year after year, persisting to the end in furthering one's own selfish interests, it is abundantly clear that any country, race, or individual will make not the slightest progress.
Nothing is better than for the child to act like a child, the youth to act befitting a youth, and the old man to act appropriate to an old man.

Just as an infant starts out being raised dreamily in the brightness of this world, and gradually comes to take interest in the things around him, for adults too it is uncommon to feel a fascination with something from the very beginning. Instead, we start off doing something with indifference, and in the process gradually come to take an interest in it.
For some people, just the thought of mathematics is enough to give them a headache. But even with dry and dull math, through the process of doing it one gradually comes to feel the interest it holds. Therefore, instead of trying something just once and giving up, by quietly persevering, you will eventually warm to it, and come to enjoy it.
Because art is long and life is short, if we are overly fastidious and choosy, we will find ourselves at the end of the line without having accomplished a single thing.
A good life is to be as patient as possible, taste as much of the world as possible, and to die having felt much gratitude to God.

## Sometimes Fighting is Best

To only volunteer service when it is convenient to you is of little spiritual meaning. To devote one's heart and body to advancing all the things of this world, regardless of personal convenience, is true service to God. It is a mistake to think that such service is difficult. As long as we have passion and sincerity, we can act in a fitting manner.

No matter how widely kind words and a compassionate heart are spread around, they will never lessen or be lost. The man who takes a single sheet of paper and a brush, and uses them to the fullness of their potential, is acting in true service of heaven and earth.

Once a man has had a brush with death, you might expect that he then resolve to do God's work—but in fact such people are all too rare.

Selfish faith leads to ruin. Unless we abandon self-interest completely for the sake of God and humanity, we cannot find true salvation, nor enter the eternal light.

No matter what you do, as long as you have a clear understanding of why you are doing it, that alone is merit enough.

We must always act with the consciousness that our actions are for God. Though two things might appear identical on the surface, if the feeling inside is different, their effects must necessarily be different as well.

When a close friend has taken ill, it is only proper to pray for the easing of their pain.

Impossible to recall the feel of water while engulfed in flames, or to look upon a flower and not find it beautiful. Adolescence brings thoughts of love; an empty belly cries for food.

In treating something which arises from the depths of the soul, the only remedy is a spiritual one.

To educate someone in the manner of one who places dried fish before a cat while constantly shouting "don't touch!", will, even though centuries pass, bring them no closer to being a better person.

If we take a good look at the way people act, it is shocking to observe the extent to which they are leading lives of self-deceit. On seeing this, one can't help but wonder just for what purpose we are born into this world.

While it is an unavoidable fact that without money one can hardly do anything in today's world, people have become far too attached to wealth.

Money alone can never bring spiritual peace and satisfaction. In fact, the wretches in this world who endure great spiritual agony for the sake of earning money are none too few. Though these people toil day and night at work they have no interest in, somewhere deep in a corner of their hearts their true interests cry to be heard, and unable

to silence them, they go to their graves with their innermost desires and practical concerns still fighting it out with each other.
Is it really so hard to live? If only you are happy just to get by from day to day, then there is no need for such spiritual turmoil. No matter how poor they are, rare is the person who goes for three days without a meal.
Essentially, all our troubles spring from lack of faith and resolve, and the blind desire to keep up appearances while catering to the whims of society.

Everything in the universe is necessary in its own way. Lying is said to be wrong, but this is not absolutely so. Depending on the circumstances, there are times when a lie is necessary. Fighting is wrong, yet there are times when to fight is the only way.

For men in ancient Greece who took pride in their strength, winning the laurel wreath of victory at the Olympic Games was the ultimate lifelong goal, and they spent their days in training to achieve this. At the time, to appear in the games was considered the highest of honors. In recent times, anyone who manages to graduate from college is praised by others, and everyone has come to believe that receiving a diploma is the most important thing in life. By merely rearranging petty and self-evident theories and claiming they are something new, students are granted bachelor's degrees and doctorates, and then they go about lording it over their fellows. Essentially, in modern society life has come to be dominated by academics.
Casting a sober eye over the course of human action since the dawn of history, it is clear that the things which men have been advocating and devoting their greatest energy to over the years have all been truly absurd.
This is every bit as true of today's society. A century from now, when our descendants look back upon the way we now run about aimlessly and madly, surely they will laugh in wonder.
Man can never wholly rise above the necessities of living in the here and now. But, if we spend our days bound in every way to the present and to human nature, we will soon lose sight of the very reason we were born in the first place.
Essentially, there is no better way to live than to believe that you are now at your best, and to move forward unhesitatingly, without worrying about things around you.
You must hold faith in yourself to the very end. At the same time, you should strive always to act in accord with nature. It is fine if others do not know my name, nor should I mind living from hand to mouth in a tenement house. As long as I am satisfied and at peace in my heart, I ask for nothing more. To pander to society, and act in ways I do not

feel, is not for me.
Clinging to our absurd attachments, during the brief time we are given on this earth, is not readily justifiable. It would be best if we spent a little more time thinking about how to live together in joy and ease.

## "Good" or "Evil"

Since man can never understand anything from listening to theory alone, unless we personally suffer through various things on our own, we will never be able to cultivate an attitude of forgiveness and tolerance towards others.
In this sense, it is necessary while we are young to build character by throwing ourselves into all kinds of circumstances. When we thoroughly attempt what we see others doing, we soon learn that the world is a difficult place, and that things do not go as easily as we might think.
Unless we can become both apprentice and master, we can never truly command the respect of
many.After meeting with a variety of people, it has struck me just how vital the observation of ceremony is in this world. I have come to realize that this world moves and is moved not so much by interior understanding, as by external circumstance, social standing, and personal interest. Likewise, in order to lead others, you must start with external, then gradually win them over to the internal. To do this, it is necessary to put external matters to full use as well.
There are many people who, upon finding religious faith, suddenly grow rigid, and try to conceal their social status, academic titles, and other outward positions—when in fact to gain the trust of others by being honest about their position, would be a far more effective means of sharing a newfound faith. That is, as long as one does not sink to gross self-advertisement.

Today's world, it must be said, is full of impure places. If we desire to improve the world, it is into these areas of impurity that we must plunge.
We must not, however, allow ourselves to become sullied in the process. We must carry with us the love and wisdom necessary to make pure the defiled. Thus, the person who has known only the simple and pure is helpless in the modern world.
It is essential to understand how to interact with others on their own level.

Anyone, even though they lack the intellect of an Aristotle, can comprehend the fact that man is a social animal. In this world, by nature so vast and full of joy, there are so many who choose to find it

cramped and miserable.
We must avoid prejudice against others at all costs. We must not limit those with whom we interact. Talking freely with grandmother and child alike, the world becomes a brighter and more cheerful place.

There is absolutely nothing in existence that is not necessary in some way. Even with those things which at a glance appear vile, we must seek out their value and work to reveal their beauty.
Through such effort, we gradually bring this world nearer to paradise.
Moreover, if we approach all things with this open feeling in our heart, we will know neither anger nor enmity.

To manifest what is in your heart through your outward actions is the true way to live.
"Good" and "Evil": these are no more than names whch men have created, and we need not be bound by them.

The sort of man who does not get angry will never know success. Most promising is the man who has such vitality that, when called for, he will fart in the presence of the Emperor.
Those who torment the weak, while fawning upon the powerful, are trash.

There is no substitute for earnestness.
This is particularly so for the path of religious faith.

Since all the myriad things of this universe spring from the same root/source, all things are siblings. That the relation between man and man should be stronger than that between man and rock is simply because the blood tie is stronger/thicker.
Japan and all other countries were originally one, but over time they increasingly branched away from each other, ending in the conflict and ill will betwen nations we see today.
Yet if we think about it, for our siblings to suffer is our own suffering as well.
Should we fail to go forward hand-in-hand with others, all our individual efforts to find happiness will be in vain.
We must be aware that our every action exerts an influence upon the vast universe.

Love grows to the extent that we take care/trouble.
Tranquility results from good balance.

The finest asset is firm resolve.